

**A Documentary History of
American Industrial
Society**

Volume V



ROBERT DALE OWEN

Leader of the Working Men's Party in New York, 1829-1830
(From a Portrait in the Library of the Working Men's Institute, New
Harmony, Indiana)

A Documentary History of American Industrial Society

Edited by John R. Commons
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Helen L. Sumner, and John B. Andrews

Prepared under the auspices of the American Bureau of
Industrial Research, with the co-operation of the
Carnegie Institution of Washington

With preface by Richard T. Ely
and introduction by John B. Clark

Volume V
Labor Movement



Cleveland, Ohio
The Arthur H. Clark Company
1910

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LABOR MOVEMENT

1820-1840

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Volume I

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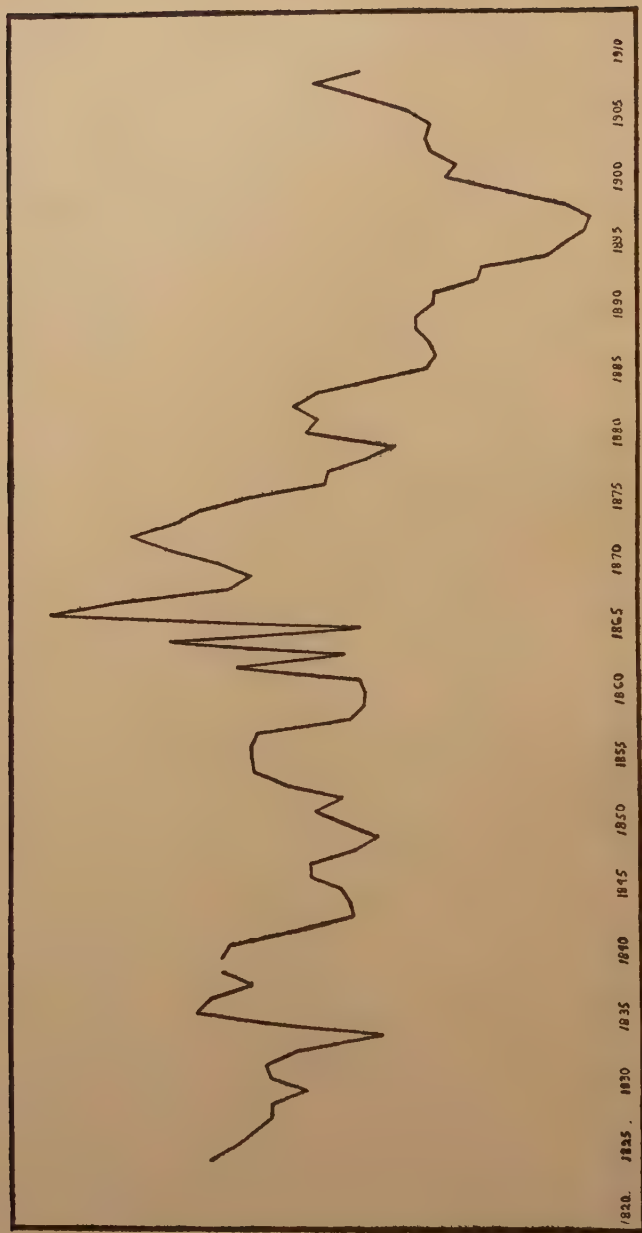
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MOVEMENT OF WHOLESALE PRICES, 1820-1908

INTRODUCTION TO VOLUMES V AND VI

The accompanying chart, representing roughly the average movement of prices of commodities through the greater part of the nineteenth century, will serve both as a clue to the labor movements of the time and as a justification of our division into three periods, 1820-1840, 1840-1860, and 1860-1880. Each upward turn of the curve of prices points to a period of business prosperity, each pinnacle is a commercial crisis, and each downward bend is an index of industrial depression. During a time when the level of prices is rising, employers generally are making profits, are multiplying sales, are enlarging their capital, are running full time and overtime, are calling for more labor, and are able to pay higher wages. On the other hand, the cost of living and the hours of labor are increased, and workmen, first as individuals, then as organizations, are impelled to demand both higher wages and reduced hours. Consequently, after prices are well on the way upward the "labor movement" emerges in the form of unions and strikes, and these are at first successful. Then the employers begin their counter-organization, and the courts are appealed to. The unions are sooner or later defeated, and when the period of depression ensues, with its widespread unemployment, the labor movement either subsides or changes its form to political or socialistic agitation, to ventures in coöperation or communism, or to other panaceas. This cycle has been so consistently repeated, although with varying shades and

details, that it has compelled recognition in the selection and editing of the documents of this series.

The periods naturally begin and end at the lowest points of the curve of prices. Thus the first period includes the rise of prices culminating in 1825 and again in 1836, and ending in the midst of the seven distressful years, 1837 to 1843. The second period includes the brief recovery of 1844, and the vigorous uprising of 1850 to 1856, while the third period, beginning with the paradoxical prosperity of the Civil War, includes the recovery of 1872 and the collapse and depression of 1873 to 1879.

Thus it is that questions of money, banking, and credit have determined our three great periods of industrial history; and it is not an extravagance to claim, after contemplating also the wider political and social agitations accompanying the industrial movement, that the curve of prices here outlined is the backbone of American history.

The period from 1820 to 1840 may rightly be named the Awakening Period of the American Labor Movement. True, there were organizations of labor prior to this period. The printers as early as 1786, and the cordwainers as early as 1794, are known to have had aggressive societies in New York and Philadelphia. But these and other labor organizations were only local societies of individual trades. They provoked occasional strikes and several trials for conspiracy; and in 1825, the culminating year of the first rise in prices, there was some political shifting of the labor vote. But it was not until 1827 that the real movement began with the organization in Philadelphia of the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations. Previous to that time organization had been limited merely to separate trades, and there had been no union of trades and no union of

working men as a class for a common object. The unskilled laborers were inarticulate, and the skilled workmen were separated by divergent trade interests. Separately each society was only a trade club, united they were a social class. An isolated society might create a disturbance—not until it united with others could it create a “movement.” “This is the first time,” said the earliest American labor paper, the *Mechanics’ Free Press*, in 1828, “that the working men have attempted, in a public meeting, to inquire whether they possess, as individuals or as a class, any right to say by whom they shall be governed.”¹ It was this class organization that aroused the general public, and what before was “interesting” or “amusing” now became menacing.

The very history of our modern word “trade-union” indicates both the confusion of the public and the novelty of the movement. The organization within a single trade was originally known as a trade association, or a trade society, as is the case today in certain trade-unions. But, to indicate the new form of representative organization, the several societies that came together adopted, first, the term Union of Trade Associations, then the term General Trades’ Union. The apostrophe after the word trades indicates the abbreviation. The *trades’ union* was simply the union of trades. The constituent *unions*, as we now name them, continued to be known as societies or associations. But the general public, which knew little of the societies but was alarmed by their union, transferred the name *trades’ union* from the representative body of all the trades to the primary body of the single trade. So that, what was originally a Trades’ Union has sought other names, such as Trades’ Assembly, Trades’ Council, Central Labor Union or Federation of Labor, leaving to the

¹ *Mechanics’ Free Press* (Philadelphia), Aug. 16, 1828, p. 2, col. 4.

union of individuals in a single trade the metaphorical phrase trade-union.

In this sense of the word America might contest with Great Britain the priority of trades-unionism. According to Mr. and Mrs. Webb, Manchester possessed a trades' union as early as 1826, but it "expired before it was so much as known to a majority of the operatives in the neighborhood."² The next union of local clubs was not effected until December, 1829, two years after the Philadelphia "Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations." But even this was not a union of different trades but a union of local societies of the same trade—the spinners.³ There is no record of this second form of organization in America until 1835 and 1836, when five trades formed organizations whose records are here brought together in the chapter on National Trade Unions. The second trades' union proper, that is, a central body of separate trades, was organized in Manchester, England, in 1830. It resulted in the National Association for the Protection of Labour, and was succeeded in 1832 by the Builders' Union or the General Trades Union,⁴ and this by the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union in 1834, which disappeared within a year.⁵ These trades unions were nominally national in extent; but a "national" union in England, covering four or five counties, would be considered a district or state assembly in America. The first National Trades' Union in the United States, whose proceedings are herewith unearthed after three generations of oblivion, was organized in 1834, and held conventions

² Webb, S. and B. *History of Trade Unionism* (1902), second edition, 107, note.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ The apostrophe after "trades" was nearly always used in America, but apparently not in England.

⁵ Webb, S. and B. *op. cit.*, 106.

in 1835, 1836, and 1837 with delegates from local trades unions as widely separated as Boston, Washington, and Cincinnati. Instead of declining in six months, it continued through three years of remarkable success and disappeared only with the panic of 1837. The local unions whose delegates formed the national, were exactly similar to the then extinct Philadelphia Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations of 1827; but when they began to organize in 1833, they borrowed from England the name trades' union. Thus it was that, both in name and in substance, the awakening period of the labor movement was the union of separate trades on the basis of the class interest common to all.

But the awakening was not in all cases complete. The separation of classes was not always decisive. Unlike the situation in England, the factory system, with its clear-cut division of employer from employee, was not yet developed. Whatever may have been its origin in other countries, the labor movement in America did not spring from factory conditions. It arose as a protest against the merchant-capitalist system.⁶ The factories were as yet confined to one branch of cotton textiles, employing mainly women and children. These did not take part in the organized movement. The effort, indeed, of the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics and Working Men to secure the coöperation of the factory operatives was distinctly a failure. But the merchant-capitalist system, with its extension of the markets through improved transportation, with its enlargement of credits through the banking system, with its option of purchase over wide areas of competing producers, had begun to reduce both the journeyman and the master-mechanic to a common level of dependency. With the rapid growth of cities and

⁶ See description of the system in Introduction, vol. iii.

the appearance of the speculative capitalist-builder the same sweat-shop methods invaded the building trades. "We would not be too severe on our employers," said the building mechanics of Boston in 1834, "they are the slaves to the capitalists as we are to them."⁷

At several points we find this reluctance of the journeyman to break away from the master, and the hesitation of the master in choosing between the side of his journeyman and that of the capitalist. The trades' union of Boston admitted the master mechanic, because "the bos is often brought back to journeywork by hard luck, and the journeyman may expect in his turn to become an employer, while both of them are invariably imposed upon and treated as if belonging to an inferior grade of society by those who live without labor."⁸ In New York and Philadelphia the lines were more clearly drawn and employers were sooner or later excluded. But even within these larger cities the movement at first was not so much the modern alignment of wage-earner against employer, as the alignment of the producing classes against the nonproducers. It was the poor against the rich, the worker against the owner. At the third meeting of the Working Men's Party in New York, it was not the employers who were given five minutes to withdraw, but "persons not living by some useful occupation, such as bankers, brokers, rich men, etc."⁹ In the words of Frances Wright, the radical free-thought agitator and friend of the working men's movement: "It is labor rising up against idleness, industry against money, justice against law and against privilege."¹⁰ It was this community of the producing class-

⁷ *The Man* (New York), May 13, 1834.

⁸ *The Man*, May 30, 1834.

⁹ *Working Man's Advocate* (New York), Oct. 13, 1829.

¹⁰ *Free Enquirer* (New York), Nove. 27, 1830.

es, rather than the wage-earning classes, that brought forth throughout the country many societies of "Farmers, Mechanics, and Working Men," and even far away in the mountains of Tennessee elevated to the position of alderman in 1834 the tailor, Andrew Johnson, on the ticket of the Working Men's Party.

Industrially the United States was just beginning to share the progress effected by the industrial revolution in England. The introduction of manufacturing industries to compete with those of the mother country was still a question in dispute. The arguments turned not only on the difficulties of competition, but on evil conditions of labor under the factory system, the revelations of which were beginning to startle England and the world. The financial system, as well as the tariff policy of the United States, was in process of development. The cities of the country were small. In 1830, New York City contained less than 200,000 persons, and in 1840 only a little over 300,000. And not only were the cities small, but the rural economy of the country was of comparatively great importance. In 1830, only 6.7 per cent, and in 1840 only 8.5 per cent, of the total population of the United States lived in cities of over 8,000 population, as compared with 33.1 per cent in 1900. Agricultural industries were predominant, compared with manufacture and commerce.

Immigration at this time, though only just beginning on a large scale, was almost as disturbing as it is today. The immigrants were chiefly English and Irish, but many of them were paupers furnished passage to this country by the parish authorities; and the Irish especially were lawless, and frequently engaged in riots. On the other hand, it must be borne in mind that these paupers were many of them merely the victims of the

English poor-law. "The term pauper, as used in England," said a newspaper writer in 1830, "and more particularly the agricultural districts, embraces that numerous class of society who depend for subsistence, solely upon the labor of their hands."¹¹ Moreover, many of the so-called riots of the period were really strikes of unskilled and ignorant laborers. Sometimes an overseer absconded with their wages and they had no means of redress. Sometimes they were subjected to rules or conditions of work which seemed to them unjust. And often their wages were insufficient to support themselves and families.

But the historical event that truly gave character to the early labor movement was the extension of manhood suffrage. It was this that made possible the two distinct but related movements, first a political movement during the years 1828 to 1832, and second a trades'-union movement from 1833 to 1837.

At the time of the constitution of 1787, possibly one person in twenty was a voter. To-day, one person in five is a voter.¹² This dilution of citizenship, so extreme in its contrast of the twentieth and the eighteenth centuries, was the work of two revolutions in the nineteenth century. The first, a peaceable one, culminating in the decade of the twenties, eliminated the distinction of property. The second, a violent one, following the civil war, eliminated the distinction of race. The first has provoked problems of government and economics which are still in process of solution; the second provoked insoluble problems and ended in reaction.

In 1827, the suffrage in the hands of unpropertied mechanics and laborers was a new and untried weapon.

¹¹ *Philadelphia National Gazette*, Aug. 18, 1830, p. 1, col. 3.

¹² Hart, A.B. *Practical Essays on American Government* (New York, 1893), 35.

Naturally, on the first provocation that brought many of them together, they experimented with it. This provocation was their failure to get shorter hours of labor and the attempt of employers to lengthen their hours. Out of their struggle for leisure sprang the first Working Men's Parties in Philadelphia and New York. The Mechanics' Union, organized as a union of trades to support strikes, resolved itself into a party to elect "friends." At first their grievance was vague. The elective franchise was not yielding to "the working classes the advantages which they were entitled to expect." Soon, however, in Philadelphia and elsewhere, they formulated their demands; and foremost stood the issues of public education, imprisonment for debt, the militia system, and mechanics' liens.

Free schools, supported by taxes, were the first demand of enfranchised labor. There were, at that time, "no public schools where children could prepare for the grammar schools. . . . In New England, excepting Rhode Island . . . the principle of free tax-supported schools for all was, in theory, accepted. Elsewhere free public elementary education was only for the poor. But even in New England the free schools were much less efficient than private ones. . . . In New York and Pennsylvania the issue was clear-cut; it was definitely and unmistakably 'free' versus 'pauper' schools."¹³ This was indeed a situation which calculated to evoke the protests and demands of the working men. Hitherto our historical knowledge of the free-school movement has ascribed that movement to the great humanitarian leaders with Horace Mann at their head. But Mr. Carlton, after a careful

¹³ Carlton, F.T. "Economic Influences upon Educational Progress in the United States, 1820-1850," in the *University of Wisconsin Bulletin*, no. 221, 22 ff.

study of the documents herewith presented, concludes that "the vitality of the movement for tax-supported schools was derived, not from the humanitarian leaders, but from the growing class of wage-earners."¹⁴ The working men placed this demand foremost. The older parties took it up and candidates pledged themselves to it. The educational leaders appealed to a constituency already awakened. The Working Men's Party disappeared, but its issue was adopted by all parties, and free education became the finest fruit of universal suffrage.

So it was with imprisonment for debt. Looking back from our vantage-ground of the twentieth century, we can hardly understand the state of mind that supported this last resort of the creditor. From that period when the body of the debtor, like his chattels, could be levied upon, we have moved to a period of exemption laws when not even his chattels, his home, or his wages can be taken for debt. Exemption laws are now taken for granted as a part of the primal nature of things, and property rights yield to human rights when the home, the family, and the minimum of subsistence are at stake. Only as we contemplate this profound revolution of three generations can we appreciate the beginning made by the Working Men's Party of 1829 and the shock given to the dominant interests by "workeyism."

Not only as a debtor was the working man driven into a corner, but also as a creditor he failed often to get the full wages due him. He was paid in store orders, and even when paid in cash he could not know that his paper money was good at its face. His employer might be a small and irresponsible boss, and the mechanic's lien was a lien good only for the master. One

¹⁴ Carlton, F.T. *op. cit.*, 122.

of the first results of the Working Men's Party was a lien law in New York good for the journeyman and laborer as well as the contractor; and this was the crude beginning of another revolution which today requires the employer to pay his laborers regularly, and in cash or equivalent, before all other creditors.

The objection of the working men to the compulsory militia system was at bottom the same as their objection to imprisonment for debt. A system designed in the early days of republican simplicity to obviate a standing army and thus to protect the rights of all, it offered to rich and poor alike the option of fine or imprisonment for nonattendance on drill and parade, at their own expense for arms and accoutrement. To the man of property this meant exemption—to the working man imprisonment.

These were the primary demands of the labor parties. They show that what the working man of the thirties asked was not mere equality before the law. He asked to be given a preference over property. Instead of an education vouchsafed only to the children of those who could afford it, he asked that the owners of property be required to pay for the education of children whose parents could not afford it. Instead of being compelled, like owners of property, to pay his debts, he asked to be exempted from the sacred obligation of contracts. Instead of equality with other creditors, he asked that wages take precedence of all other forms of credit.

The fact that in our own day and generation we still are told by high authority to affirm the equal treatment of capital and labor before the law ought to enable us to understand the position of those who in 1829 opposed the working men's demands. From the accepted standpoint of their time these demands were not inspired by a just regard for equality, but by "agrarian" thirst for

other people's property. Their standpoint was the naïve theory, even yet animating our jurisprudence, that thinks only in terms of property, and conceives of labor and wages only as one kind of property to be treated like other kinds. It is because our modern view has shifted unconsciously from the standpoint of property to the standpoint of man that we fail to see either the consistency of those who opposed the demands of 1829 or our inconsistency in asserting the equal treatment of capital and labor. In this we have accepted the working men's point of view as it was in 1829, unwitting that in so far we give precedence, not equality, to labor over capital.

This was done, not by virtue of partisanship for labor, but because experience of the new political and economic conditions had gone far enough to show that oppression of the working man brought down the social fabric with him. Compulsory militia service had become a source of dissipation; absconding contractors and imprisonment for debt had demoralized the laborer, and discouraged his efforts toward honest industry; an ignorant electorate was a political menace. Thus a nation whose industrial progress was bringing forth a class of wage-earners endowed with the suffrage could well afford to give to labor priority over capital before the law.

Other issues that appeared in the working men's platforms were equal taxation, a less expensive system of legal procedure, no legislation on religion, direct election of all officers, a district system of election, and opposition to banks and other chartered monopolies. These issues indicate the points of agreement between wage-earners and other producers. Each of them has been taken up by other parties, and reforms have been enacted, though not always in the crude and negative

manner advocated by the working men. Thus chartered monopolies have not been abolished, but the special legislation and its political lobby required for the incorporation of each company, which was the real evil that justified the term monopoly, have given way to general acts of incorporation.

The political movement ended before 1832. The trades' union period began in 1833. These were years of intense engrossment in national politics. Jackson and the Bank occupied the stage and excluded nearly every other political concern. They were years, too, of business stagnation. Not until 1835 did the working men bestir themselves—this time under entirely different conditions, and with entirely different policies born of experience and necessity.

The bottom of the business depression was reached in 1834. Thereupon, after the Bank of the United States had subsided, thanks to Jackson and destructive Democracy supported by the working men's votes, its place was filled by a host of state banks and a flood of paper money. The working men's papers echo their protests, especially against small bills. Beginning in 1835 this inflation drove prices upward at a rate unequalled in this country during any other period, excepting the civil war. Wheat flour in New York, costing \$5.00 a barrel in 1834, rose to \$7.00 in July, 1835, \$8.00 in April, 1836, and \$12.00 in March, 1837; mess pork, \$13.00 to \$14.00 in 1834, \$30.00 in October, 1836, and so on for the necessities of life.¹⁵ Rents rose in similar ratio. "The distress of the poor," said the *New York Evening Post* in February, 1836, "is beyond description. The price of fuel has risen beyond the means of the needy."

Two years before the time of this bank inflation the

¹⁵ United States *Finance Report* (1863), 302-308.

seed of trades' unionism had been planted again, this time in New York, followed by Baltimore, Philadelphia, Boston, Albany, Troy, Washington, Newark, New Brunswick, Schenectady, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and Louisville. Profiting by the lesson of the Working Men's Parties, politics and religion were proscribed. The trades' unions adhered strictly to their purpose of aiding societies in their strikes, either by contributions or by publication and warning against employers who refused concessions.

The culmination of the local trades' unions was the National Trades' Union. This was the first organization of American wage-earners on a national scale, the remote ancestor of the National Labor Union of 1867, the Knights of Labor, 1878, and the American Federation of Labor, 1886. Its constitution reveals its primitive character, for it was not an organization of national "trade" unions, each with its "locals," but an organization of local "trades' unions," each with its societies of different trades. It held its last convention in 1837, and from that time until now this remarkable episode in the history of American labor has been utterly forgotten.

The National Trades' Union was an association of local assemblies or unions, each of which was composed of local societies of the several trades. There were as yet no national organizations of the local societies of a single trade. The railroad had not appeared with its extension of the area of competition. Only the rivers and the highways afforded transit for the itinerant mechanic or the escaped apprentice, as he painfully moved from an area of low wages to one of high wages. But the strikes of 1835 and 1836 vividly impressed the local societies with the need of something more than the support of other trades in the same locality. The cordwainers, printers, carpenters, and other trades started

correspondence or held conventions, showing that the extending area of competition was a matter of common experience. But it was not until thirty years thereafter, when the civil war and the railroad had brought forth a new labor movement, that the modern form of organization, the National and the International Trade Union, finally took the place of the primitive form, the National Trades' Union. Indeed, not until the "greenback" had again forced up the cost of living in 1863, as did the wild-cat banks in 1835, did a labor movement arise comparable to that of the thirties.

The issues that were placed foremost in the trades'-union period of the thirties were different from those of the political period. The political issues were repeated, but new issues were emphasized. These were hours of labor, wages, prices, paper money, public employment, factory legislation and the competition of women, prison competition, and freedom of the public lands.

Although the trades' unions existed prior to 1835, it was not until that year, with its rise of prices, that they awoke to vigorous action. But it was not the cost of living that first demanded attention—it was the hours of labor and overwork. The feverish prosperity of bank inflation and the taste of unusual profits enticed employers to drive their workmen; and the long hours of labor which were welcomed as a boon in time of depression became unbearable in time of prosperity. The system of working from sun to sun had been taken over from agriculture without question, but the city mechanic and factory worker, confined indoors to the repetition of a single task, revolted under the changed conditions. Against the farmer's "sun to sun" he raised the standard "six to six." The struggle centered in Philadelphia, where the trades' union entered upon a career of success

and enthusiasm. It had the support of physicians, lawyers, merchants, and politicians, and the year 1835 is memorable as the turning-point from which is dated the establishment in this country of the ten-hour system. True, there were unions that demanded increased wages, but these were mainly piece-workers seeking the equivalent of a reduction of hours without reduction of earnings.

It was not until 1836 that the increased cost of living forced the unions generally into strikes for increased wages. Strike followed strike, many of them successful, but the gains were promptly swallowed as prices continued to rise. Trades and occupations hitherto unorganized came into the trades' unions. Symptoms of over-organization and conflicting jurisdiction began to appear. Finally, in despair, the unions turned to co-operation as a substitute for strikes, and trade societies exhausted their treasuries in the vain endeavor to become their own employers.

These circumstances explain in part how it is that the labor movement in the United States, contrasted with the movement in other countries, has often shifted from the strictly industrial field of employer and employee to the financial and political field of money and banks. Wages move up and down more slowly and less excessively than prices, and so, during the period of rising prices and prosperity, the increased cost of living absorbs the gain from increased employment, while during the period of falling prices and business depression the decrease in cost of living is thwarted by unemployment. This accounts for the diametrically opposite positions taken by the working men before 1840 and after 1860. In the thirties they favored hard money and opposed paper money—in the sixties they opposed hard money and favored the greenback. Paper money before 1840

was issued by private banks, was much of it discounted or worthless, and by its inordinate inflation produced a distressful rise in the cost of living. But, during the civil war, paper money was issued by the government; and after the war the effort to retire the greenback and to return to a specie basis produced business depression and unemployment. The workmen opposed paper money in 1835 because its inflation augmented the cost of living—they favored paper money in 1867 because its contraction occasioned loss of employment.

The question of public employment was mainly a question of hours of labor. The authorities in Philadelphia were the first to grant the ten-hour demands, and Andrew Jackson's administration did the same in the navy yards and arsenals where labor was organized. It was this experience that led the National Trades' Union in 1836 to turn away from a hostile Congress to a vulnerable executive, and to plan the campaign that led to Martin Van Buren's famous ten-hour order of 1840.

The factory system was almost entirely outside the labor movement, and the competition of women and children showed itself most keenly when organized labor attempted to advance its wages or shorten its hours by strikes. Factory legislation was therefore for the first time seriously broached, and the beginning was made of that agitation that took the leading place in the following decade.

The competition of prison labor also showed itself as a drag, now that the movement for higher wages had begun, and organized labor at once formulated the issue which it has insistently pressed for three-fourths of a century.

The importance of the public lands now also dawned upon the organized working men. They discovered

that the reason why their wages did not rise and why their strikes were ineffective was because escape from the crowded cities of the east was shut off by land speculation. In their conventions and papers, therefore, they demanded that the public lands should no more be treated as a source of revenue to relieve taxpayers, but should be treated as an instrument of social reform to raise the wages of labor. And when we in later years refer to our wide domain and our great natural resources as reasons for high wages in this country, it is well to remember that access to these resources was secured only by agitation and by act of legislature. Not merely as a gift of nature but mainly as a demand of democracy have the nation's resources contributed to the elevation of labor. And it was in the events of 1827-1837, with their futile immediate results, that the lesson was learned which in a later day led the nation's industrial democracy even to civil war in order to establish the freedom of the public lands.

The trades'-union movement reached its climax in 1836. The national convention of that year shows the beginnings of disintegration in the hopelessness of strikes and the attention given to panaceas and legislation. The turning-point came in New York, when the employers formed a counter-organization of all lines of business and made a test on the tailors. Twenty were convicted of conspiracy.¹⁸ The trial was attended by crowds. A mass-meeting of protest was held in the park. It called a state convention, and the working men went over to the Equal Rights, or Loco-foco, Party to aid in its attack on banks and chartered monopolies. Tammany lost control of the city and only Ely Moore, the president of the Trades' Union whom Tammany had nominated for Congress, saved the remnant. The

¹⁸ See vol. iv, "Twenty Journeymen Tailors, *People v. Faulkner*."

Trades' Union dwindled and ended where the movement of 1829 began—in politics. The politicians took a lesson and learned the importance of the labor vote. The Whigs framed up their argument of protection to labor in place of the obsolete protection to capital, and won the election of 1840. Tammany Hall ousted its aristocracy of bankers and merchants, and took on its modern form of the friend of labor in the interest of plutocracy.¹⁷ Thus did the labor movement of the thirties furnish to the nineteenth century both its philosophy of labor's priority over property and its secret of maneuvering labor to the advantage of capital.

JOHN R. COMMONS—HELEN L. SUMNER.

¹⁷ Myers, Gustavus. *History of Tammany Hall*, 134.

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I
ECONOMIC
AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

I. THE LAND QUESTION

(a) MEMORIAL TO CONGRESS

Mechanics' Free Press, Oct. 25, 1828, p. 1, col. 3, 4. The *Mechanics' Free Press* was the first labor paper published during any considerable period, and the first of which any file has been preserved in this country.

[The following is a copy of a Memorial which will be presented to Congress at its next session.—ED. *Mechanics' Free Press*.]

To the Honourable the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress assembled.

The undersigned citizens of the United States, respectfully suggest to Congress the propriety of placing all the Public Lands, without the delay of sales, within the reach of the people at large, by the right of a title of occupancy only.

Their reasonings on the case, to be brief, are as follows:

1st. That until the Public Lands shall have been actually put under cultivation, it is clear they will be entirely useless.

2dly. That they are fully satisfied that the present state of affairs, must lead to the wealth of a few, and thus place within their reach the means of controlling all the lands of our country.

3dly. That as all men must occupy a portion of the earth, they have, naturally, a birth-right in the soil: And that while this right shall be subject to the control of others, they may be deprived of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

4thly. That hence, it is perceived by them, that a true spirit of independence can not be enjoyed, by the great body of the People, nor the exercise of freedom secured to them, so long as the use of the soil is withheld.

5thly. That the General Government can be under no necessity of holding these Lands as an indemnity for existing appropriations nor for future expenditures. The National Debt, within a very few years, will have been liquidated: And the necessary tendency of the Revenue to the Treasury will then demand more legislation in order to keep its surplus judiciously diffused for the purposes of an efficient Circulating Medium, than for those of any future constitutional disbursements.

6thly. That the mere sale of these Lands can give little ability to the people in sustaining national expenditures. As the relief thus to be derived, could only arise from resources at that time extant, it is clear that this would be but the shifting of existing resources, however insufficient, from the People to the Government. But by the widely extensive improvements of an Agricultural nature, which the general cultivation of these Lands would induce, the people would against the hour of emergency, by large additions to the ordinary Revenue, have absolutely created the means of meeting all the prospective expenditures of the most generous administration of the General Government.

And, finally, that they deprecate every species of monopoly and exclusive privileges, and more especially all those which produce unnatural exclusions with relation to the Public Lands. But that it is further respectfully suggested to the Representatives of the People, that should any of the purchasers of these Lands for the purpose of speculation, conceive that they are to be

injured by the operation of the proposed measure, for which, however, there can be but a remote apprehension entertained, your Memorialists recommend that the purchase money, with interest if necessary, be refunded to them: and that those Lands be thus suffered to revert again to the Government for the use of the People.

That it is the opinion of your Petitioners that, (the People themselves being, *de facto*, the Government) were the Public Lands thus perpetually held only to their use, it would be, perhaps, the only effectual prevention of future monopoly and the best safeguard of the American Republic.

That your Memorialists recommend to Congress that the Public Lands be reserved as a donation to the citizens of the United States in the character of perpetual leases, free from rent, and subject to revert to the Government when the lessee or his heirs fail to cultivate or occupy it in proper person, for—years together; providing that, in the future location of towns, &c. for general or public purposes, the incidental possessor of the soil, besides a reasonable compensation for it, shall only share and share alike, in the lots and other advantages thus to be derived.

That your Petitioners, therefore pray your Honourable Body to enact a law authorizing a Grant to any individual who shall apply for it, of the free use of so much of the Public Lands (not less perhaps than twenty nor more than forty acres) as they in their wisdom shall deem sufficient, and limiting its conditions to the principles above suggested. And your Petitioners, &c.

(b) THE RELATION OF PUBLIC LANDS TO STRIKES

The Man (New York), May 21, 1835, p. 2, col. 1. *The Man* was supposed to be the first daily penny paper in this country and was edited by George Henry Evans, also editor of the *Working Man's Advocate*, and later one of the most prominent figures in the agitation for free land.

The shoemakers of Newark have been some time "on the strike" for an advance of about twelve per cent. in their wages, which were before miserably inadequate to their comfortable subsistence. The Ladies' Branch of the Trade in this city have also turned out from the same cause the present week, and the Journeymen Boot Makers of Newark have turned out "for a redress of grievances." We wish all these useful mechanics success in their object, knowing as we do that they deserve it, but we tell them again, as we have often told them before, that they must look to something more radical than turn-outs to give them a just remuneration for their labor. They must look to a removal of the cause which creates a surplus of laborers in each mechanical branch, the Monopoly of the Land by speculators.

We do not propose that the system which enables a single individual to hold immense tracts of land in barrenness till he can get his price for it should be at once reversed, however unjust and contrary to natural right we consider that system to be; nor, perhaps, had our predecessors made the air or the water private property, should we advocate that every one might breathe such a portion of the one or drink such a portion of the other as he might find unappropriated to the use of any other person; but we have proposed, and do propose, that the public lands should no longer be sold, but that any man, unpossessed of land, should be allowed to take possession of a certain portion of the unappropriated domain for the purpose of cultivation, and, to prevent

speculation, that no one should be allowed to hold more than a certain portion. If this proposal were adopted, it would, to be sure, prevent a few individuals from becoming immensely rich, in a day, without labor, (the only just foundation of riches,) by "land speculations," but, as a set off for this, it would prevent a surplus of laborers in any mechanical branch and, consequently, the necessity of turn-outs.

2. MONEY AND BANKS

(a) SMALL NOTES

(1) In Pennsylvania.

Mechanics' Free Press, April 11, 1829, p. 2, col. 2.

Three months have only elapsed since the law prohibiting the circulation of small notes went into operation, and the working people have had some experience of its benefits. No longer do our employers put off to us in payment for our wages, the ragged promises they could not otherwise dispose of. No longer are our wives obliged to resort to the brokers to get their notes changed into merchantable money, at a loss of from five to ten per cent, before they could purchase the articles necessary to subsistence. A clear gain of twenty per cent has accrued to the productive part of the community, since the suppression of this evil. When we take into the account, loss of time, vexations attendant on getting the note off: having them refused on suspicion of being counterfeits, &c. together with the circumstance of being confined to deal with certain individuals, and being deprived from dealing at the cheapest stalls because Mr. Honest would not take such money as Mr. Cunning was willing to receive provided he got a good price. I can appeal with confidence to the labouring class, if this has not been the way they have been imposed on for the last 15 or 20 years, and whether any of these difficulties are now felt? . . . In addition to which we have not been obliged to turn out for prices and waste our time in fruitless contention with our employers—a thing always irksome, and generally attended with unpleasant consequences . . .

SIMON SNYDER, JR.

(2) In New York.

Working Man's Advocate (New York), Oct. 1, 1831, p. 2, col. 5.

SMALL NOTES. The greatest evil which the working men (particularly the producers of wealth) have to contend with, is the Credit System, which enables those who possess property not only to live without labor on the labor of others, but to increase the quantity of their property while so living in utter uselessness. The greatest branch of the credit system is the banking system, which branch, under our present law, is a monopoly—a thing that should not be legalized in a republican country. The banking system, which is a branch of the credit system, would be a great evil—a greater evil than any other branch of that system—if it was not a monopoly—if all were allowed, as they ought to be, to carry on the banking business instead of a few: but as a monopoly, it is a greater evil still. This monopoly must be abolished, before mechanics of any description, or any other working men, can obtain the full value of their labor—before they can prevent the nonproducers from obtaining the produce of their labor without rendering them an equivalent of the produce of labor in return. But as the monopoly cannot be abolished suddenly, it must be done gradually. A good commencement will be, to induce the legislature to pass a law prohibiting the circulation in this state, of bills of a less amount than ten or five dollars, and to reject hereafter all applications for charters. This can be done by electing men favorable to these views, or, if the working men cannot elect such men, by meeting together and determining that they will present all the bills they possess or may receive at the banks and demand specie for them, immediately, until the desired object is obtained. A simultaneous effort throughout the state would easily effect the object. Memorials should be circulated immediately. . .

(b) INFLUENCE OF PAPER MONEY ON THE
WORKING PEOPLE

Philadelphia *National Laborer*, May 14, 1836, p. 31, col. 1. The *National Laborer* was the successor of the *Mechanics' Free Press* of Philadelphia.

. . . Paper money has spread its blasting influence most severely upon the working people. Almost all other classes have picked some of the crumbs from the sumptuous feasts it has prepared—but in no way has the productive laborer been benefited—on the contrary, it has increased his toil, and decreased his reward. It has expanded trade, it has made improvements—it has drawn into the possession of those who issue it, immense sums of unearned gold—it has made the country appear happy and prosperous—all which apparent prosperity is, (as Mr. Paulding beautifully expresses it,) merely “the bloom on the cheek of consumption.”

It requires but a moment's examination, to be convinced of the withering effect of fictitious capital. The working men know it because they feel it—the merchants will not know, it, because, as yet, they have numerous resources which enable them to leave a business when their gains in it become few.

(c) THE IDLERS AND THE WORKERS

Radical Reformer and Working Man's Advocate, Philadelphia, July 4, 1835, p. 63.

Of paper coin, how vast the power!
It makes or breaks us in an hour,
And probably a beggar's shirt,
If finely ground, and freed of dirt,
Then re-compress'd, by hand or hopper,
And printed on with plate of copper,
Might raise ten “Idlers” to renown,
And tumble fifty “Workers” down.

3. PRISON LABOR

(a) THE EFFECT OF PRISON LABOR

New York Mechanics' Gazette, May 17, 1823, p. 3, col. 1, 2. Communication.

You see, Sir, what the employment of State Prisoners in the mechanic trades will lead to. I presume you see it: for I cannot believe that any can be so blind as not to discover the dissatisfaction it creates in the minds of all those whose business happens to be introduced in the prison. You now perceive that the cabinet makers have had a meeting, and that they protest in strong language against the employment of prisoners in their art. The cabinet makers now begin to feel alarmed; they now are awakened to a sense of their interest and their duty, in endeavoring to put a stop to this vile business of manufacturing in the prison to the disadvantage of mechanics, and mechanics only. They now see that the brush makers, comb makers, shoe makers, and others had cause to complain; and I hope they will also see, as well as all other mechanics, that the only way left for redress is for all the mechanics, whether their business be at present interfered with or not, to turn out at the next general election, and to elect or give their suffrages to such, and such only as will pledge themselves to use their best endeavours to stop the evils of which we so justly complain. Let no man, who is a mechanic think himself safe, because his business is not conducted in the prison; for he knows not how soon an attempt may be made to wrest from him what must be ever dear to him, a fair opportunity of supporting his wife and children, by the labor of his hands and the profit of his trade. . . .

(b) STATE PRISON SALES

Farmers', Mechanics' and Workingmen's Advocate (Albany), July 14, 1830, p. 2, col. 4.

STATE PRISON SALES. We have before us two lists of the prices of Carpenters, Joiners, Coach and Cabinet Makers' tools. One exhibits the prices for which they were sold by a manufacturing company in this city—the other at the Auburn State Prison. A comparison of these lists illustrates the operation of the present system of prison sales upon regular industry. We are not prepared to say that the labor of felons should not be employed by the government, and the manufactures it produces be brought into the market. But the government grossly abuses its trust, and inflicts an incalculable injury on society, when it permits this labor to control the results of regular and honest competition, and compels the citizen who has always kept his fealty, to put his industry below the ordinary standard of reward. The following are the contrasts of prices, exhibiting the depreciation in the value of labor, which the government has effected. Beside this, the government agents made a deduction of forty per cent. to wholesale purchasers, while the common discount made by private manufacturers was but twenty-five per cent.

PRIVATE PRICES AUBURN PRICES

Double jointing planes	\$2.25	\$2.06
Single jointing planes	1.87½	1.50
Double cast steel planes	2.00	1.81
Single cast steel planes	1.62½	1.25
One inch beads	1.00	.75
Grooving ploughs, 8 irons	7.25	6.50
Reeding planes, ¾ inch	1.50	1.06
Side rabbits	1.25	1.06
Torus beads, 1 inch	1.12½	.75

This is but a small part of the articles enumerated, and do not exhibit so great a depreciation in prices, as many other articles manufactured in prison particularly stone and leather, and blacksmith work. . . . If the state comes into the market, it must follow, and not lead it. Its policy should be to encourage a fair and honorable competition of industry. When by such means as we have stated it checks or discourages it, even in the remotest degree, it is treacherous to the interests of the community, which it was appointed to protect.

(c) REPORT OF THE PHILADELPHIA CORDWAINERS

National Laborer, March 26, 1836.

REPORT OF THE SOCIETY OF JOURNEYMEN CORDWAINERS OF PHILADELPHIA, RELATIVE TO PRISON LABOR

. . . . After the Supervisors of the Eastern Penitentiary introduced labor into their system, (which system has become the general Penitentiary system of the State) their attention seems to have been devoted to revenue from the labor of the convicts, by confining them principally to two mechanical branches, without the slightest regard for the interests of those branches, with whom they would bring the labor of the felon in competition.

In the Fourth Annual Report of the Inspectors of the Eastern Penitentiary made to the Legislature of 1833, the warden says, "It has been proved that the convicts can labor to advantage in their cells at both weaving and shoemaking:" and the same report says, "We entertain the belief heretofore expressed, that when the entire plan shall be completed, and the prison fully occupied, a revenue will arise from the labor of the convicts." From the same report, it appears that there were at that time in the Eastern Penitentiary, 97 prisoners, who were employed as follows:

Weavers, dyers, and dressers, altogether, 43; carpen-

ters, 4; blacksmiths, 5; wheelwrights, 2; at making and mending clothes, 3; 1 segar maker, &c. and 32 Shoemakers! only 4 of the Shoemakers understood that branch when first admitted! it thus appears that 28 convicts were made Shoemakers!

By the Fifth Annual Report, it appears that there were in the Eastern Penitentiary, December 31, 1833, 154 prisoners. Weavers, 38; warpers, dyers, spoolers, and winders, 21; blacksmiths, 5; carpenters, 5; wool-pickers, 9, &c.; Shoemakers, 52! the warden adds, that "only seven of the Shoemakers understood that trade when admitted!" number of convicts made Shoemakers, forty-five.

By the Sixth Annual Report, it appears that there were in the Eastern Penitentiary, on the 31st of December, 1834, 218 prisoners; sick and recently arrived, 35; leaving 183 able prisoners, of whom 83 were employed at Shoemaking, the others (one hundred) were employed in about nine other different mechanical branches; only 9 of the Shoemakers understood that trade on admission—number of convicts made Shoemakers seventy-four!

The Report for the past year, your Committee have been unable to obtain, and they therefore cannot give an exact statement as to the number of Shoemakers now in our Penitentiary, but we feel confident that the above comparative statement will satisfy every unbiased mind, that by far the greater number of convicts are taught Shoemaking, and consequently the evils of prison labor fall with a heavier hand upon Cordwainers, than upon any other class of operatives. . . . It is said that the number of convicts now employed at shoemaking in the different Prisons and Jails in Pennsylvania, amount altogether to about 300, each of which average, at the very lowest calculation, 7 pair of shoes per week, at the rate

specified; 300 convicts will throw into the market, annually, 109,200 pair of shoes. Mr. William Griffith, late Superintendent of the shoemaking department at the Eastern Penitentiary, states that the shoes manufactured therein, were sold at thirty per cent. below the regularly established price, a price by which no regular manufacturer could pretend to sustain himself and pay half wages to his Journeymen! Can any person possessing the slightest charity, or the most superficial view of things, deny that this is a most ruinous competition?

And again: the hiring of the labor of the convicts to firms, or to individuals, at most reduced prices, whereby those individuals are enabled to undersell the manufacturers who employ honest men. . . . We are informed by the late Superintendent of the Eastern Penitentiary, that, at the commencement of 1834, the Supervisors of the Eastern Penitentiary took "uppers" and "stuffs" from the establishment of Joshua C. Oliver, of this city, under contract, to make them into "Brogans" and other sorts of shoes, at 34 cents per pair—being from ten to fifteen cents below the most reduced Journeymen's wages! a price at which no honest man could subsist on; numerous persons have repeatedly seen large vehicles start from the above named establishment loaded with "stuffs" and "materials" and designed for the Penitentiary; and it is notorious among shoe-dealers and merchants, that Mr. Oliver is enabled to sell shoes twenty per cent. cheaper than any similar establishment in Philadelphia! it is also known that there other establishments which possess similar advantages.

Under the most flourishing situations of trade, such evils are most grievous, and formidable, but view them at a crisis, when the honest Cordwainers are claiming of the employers a more equitable remuneration for their labor—with such a formidable opposition—with

such facilities as Prison labor affords—the employers could compel them to stand out till starvation and desolation would stare them in the face, or cause them to work at such wages as their avarice may prescribe. This is no fancied picture—it is not a subject which requires the colouring tints of imagination. It will be recollected that the Pennsylvania Prison Labor System is but little beyond its infancy; that the Managers of the Eastern Penitentiary have recently obtained enormous appropriations to enable them to render their manufactories as extensive as possible—a system which, if suffered to be carried out, will sink the wages of the Cordwainer to the very lowest degree—annihilate every impulse to honest industry—and render his condition barely preferable to that of the incarcerated felon. Yet these evils are not more nefarious than those which fall upon us in a moral point of view. About 400 convicts are every year discharged from our penitentiaries and jails; of these, a vast number (according to the system of penitentiary teaching) are shoemakers, and thus, annually, is a phalanx of the most ingenious and infamous felons of all nations and colors thrust into our profession. . . .

SILAS S. STEELE, AARON KEELER,
PATRICK CONVERY, ISRAEL YOUNG,

Committee.

4. CHILD LABOR

(a) CHILDREN IN MASSACHUSETTS FACTORIES, 1825

Massachusetts *Legislative Files*, 1825, Senate, no. 8074. This is from a manuscript record in the State House at Boston.

REPORT ON RETURNS OF CHILDREN EMPLOYED IN FACTORIES

Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In Senate, 14 June, 1825.

The Committee on Education to whom was referred so much of His Excellency's speech as related to that subject and to whom were also referred the returns made to the Secretary's office by virtue of a resolve passed on the 26 Feby last in relation to children employed in factories have had the same under consideration and ask leave to report that the cordially unite in the sentiments expressed by His Excellency, and solemnly recognized by our venerable ancestors in the charter of their rights, "that wisdom & learning as well as virtue, diffused generally among the people, are necessary to the preservation of their rights and liberties."

The importance of this sentiment cannot be too sensibly felt in a Republic, which depends for its annual organization, its existence, and efficiency, on the ability of the people to understand, and their virtue to preserve the inestimable advantages of free government. Nor can it be doubted that our fellow citizens of the present day, imbibing the principles of a virtuous ancestry, will feel bound to "preserve, improve, and extend public provisions for the education of children & youth." The provisions already made for primary schools, the liberal grants for Academies & the generous donations bestowed on the University & Colleges of this Common-

wealth relieve the community from any apprehension that this great interest can for a moment be neglected.

The Committee are not aware that any interposition by the Legislature at present is necessary in this regard, but they deem it important that its members in their private & public capacity should see that the requirements of existing laws are respected & enforced.

There are however two branches of the great business of Education which have recently acquired consequence and in the opinion of this Committee well deserve very serious consideration. The first is the establishment of an Institution for the education of the laboring classes in the practical Arts & Sciences.

On this subject the Committee are happy to find that Commissioners appointed under a resolve of 22^d February last are preparing a system embracing this extensive subject, which must necessarily require a very careful arrangement of detail; and that a report may be expected from them at an early day of the next session of this Legislature.

It is not however to be doubted that private liberality & individual encouragement may do much for that part of the Community engaged in pursuits of Agriculture, and that the patronage of the Legislature to enterprises of this kind, may, as they present themselves, be attended with advantage.

The other department, referred to, embraces the care of young persons engaged in manufacturing establishments, whose constant occupation in their daily tasks, may gather round them a rust [?] of ignorance as to all other concerns.

The Committee are happy to coincide with his Excellency that an "American sentiment" prevails throughout the country, to which these establishments are not exceptions, & which prevents them from being danger-

ous "to the moral habits & chaste manners" of the people.

Still however this is a subject always deserving the parental care of a vigilant government, and the Com^e are happy to find it has not escaped the attention of the Legislature. By the resolve of the last session of the General Court first above mentioned the Selectmen of every town in this Comth & the Mayor & Aldermen of the City of Boston were instructed to send to the office of the Secretary of the Comth a statement of the number of persons under sixteen years of age employed by any incorporated Manufacturing Comp^y within their town or city setting forth the length of time during which they are usually kept at work & the opportunities allowed & means provided for their education. The returns made in pursuance thereof have been laid before this Committee and are very interesting documents.

But inasmuch as the Resolve related only to incorporated Institutions, the returns do not present the full number of children engaged in manufactories.

It appears however that the time of employment is generally twelve or thirteen hours each day, excepting the Sabbath, which leaves little opportunity for daily instruction. Regard is paid to the instruction of these Juvenile laborers as opportunity permits, but some further legislative provisions may hereafter become necessary, that the children who are at a future day to become proprietors of these establishments, or at least greatly to influence their affairs, may not be subjected to too great devotion to pecuniary interest at the risk of more than an equivalent injury in the neglect of intellectual improvement.

The committee are not prepared to submit any specific propositions which could be acted upon at the present session, they therefore report that the further con-

sideration of said returns be referred to the next session of this general Court. For the Com^e, J. T. AUSTIN.

In Senate, June 15, 1825. Accepted—Attest—

PAUL WILLARD, Clerk.

ABTRACT OF RETURNS OF CHILDREN EMPLOYED IN
MANUFACTORIES

	BOYS	GIRLS	
Amesbury	3	8	They attend school the principal part of the time at the Town School for 4 months
Brimfield	5	10	Work 12 hours each day— There is a good school at which they can attend as their parents judge proper
Boylston (West)	3	7	Work 12 hours pr day. At school 8 weeks
Bellingham	11	9	Work 12 hours pr day. No oppy for School except by employg substitutes
Boston	14	0	No Schoolg
Bridgewater North	5	7	Work 12 hours. Cannot attend School & be employed
Cambridge	25	0	Can attend Eveg school at the expence of the Manufact. Co.
Chelmsford	3	51	Work 12 hours
Danvers	0	1	Work 12 hours
Duxboro	1	10	Work from sunrise to sunset
Dorchester	8	30	Instruction well attended to
Franklin	4	2	Work 12 hours. Sunday School
Framingham	7	10	Work 12 hours. Are allowed 3 months for schooling
Hopkinton	6	4	Work 12 hours
Lancaster	0	4	Attend S. in winter
Leicester	5	5	Have 8 weeks Schooling
Ludlow	4	24	11 Hours work. Good village School
Marshfield	0	6	Work 6 months & attend School the rest of the time
Methuen	4	10	Some little chance for Schg
Newbury	4	2	Work 11 hours pr day
Northboro	4	1	Work 11½ hours have attended S. very little. Propose to do better!

Pembroke	2	3	Work 12 hours
Rehoboth	8	13	Work 12 hours except in one factory for 2 mo. when there is no water
Southbridge	13	11	Average 12 hours – These children are better off than their neighbors!
“	7	9	Average 12 hours
“	2	1	“ “ “
“	7	5	“ “ “
Springfield	8	14	Work 12½ hours
Seekonk	59	80	Work 12 hours. Some may get 2 mo. Schoolg
Troy*	34	69	Work all day. There are good public & private S. & a free Sunday School
Taunton	29	61	Work 12 hours – Sunday School
Waltham	17	59	As much oppy for Schoolg as can be expected
Ware	4	9	Generally employ adults
Walpole	6	1	Work 9 mo.
Western	0	3	Work 8 mo.
Wellington	42	45	All day

354 574 [*sic* 584] 928 TOTAL

(b) CHILDREN IN PHILADELPHIA FACTORIES, 1830

Mechanics' Free Press, Aug. 21, 1830, p. 2, col. 3, 4. Communication,
signed “Many Operatives.”

In looking over one of your late numbers, I was rejoiced to find that some friend has noticed the sufferings of people employed in our manufactories; particularly in that of cotton. It is a well known fact, that the principal part of the helps in cotton factories consist of boys and girls, we may safely say from six to seventeen years of age, and are confined to steady employment during the longest days in the year, from daylight until dark, allowing, at the outside, one hour and a half per day. In consequence of this close confinement, it renders it entirely impossible for the parents of such children to obtain for them any education or knowledge,

* This town is now Fall River. – Eps.

save that of working that machine, which they are compelled to work, and that too with a small sum, that is hardly sufficient to support nature, while they on the other hand are rolling in wealth, of[f] the vitals of these poor children every day. We noticed the observation of our Pawtucket friend in your number of June 19th, 1830, lamenting the grievances of the children employed in those factories. We think his observations very correct, with regard to their being brought up as ignorant as Arabs of the Desert; for we are confident that not more than one-sixth of the boys and girls employed in such factories are capable of reading or writing their own name. We have known many instances where parents who are capable of giving their children a trifling education one at a time, deprived of that opportunity by their employer's threats, that if they did take one child from their employ, (a short time for school,) such family must leave the employment—and we have even known these threats put in execution. Now as our friend observes, we may establish schools and academies, and devise every means for the instruction of youth in vain, unless we also give time for application; we have heard it remarked to some employers, that it would be commendable to congress to shorten the hours of labour in factories; the reply was: it would be an infringement on the rights of the people. We know the average number of hands employed by one manufacturer to be, at the lowest estimate, fifty men, women and children. Now the query is: whether this individual, or this number employed by him, is the people.

It is not our intention at present, to undertake, a thorough discussion of this interesting subject, but rather to give some hints on the subject, which, we hope, may attract the notice of your readers, and be the means

of arousing some abler pen to write on the matter; for we think it is high time the public should begin to notice the evil that it begets. We see the evil that follows the system of long labor much better than we can express it; but we hope our weak endeavors may not prove ineffectual. We must acknowledge our inability prevents us from expressing our sentiment fluently, at present, but we hope to appear again in a more correct manner.

MANY OPERATIVES.

(c) CHILD LABOR AT PATERSON, N.J., 1835

National Trades' Union (New York), Aug. 15, 1835, p. 3, col. 3.

Quoted from the *Paterson Courier*.

Paterson, Aug. 11th, 1835.

MESSRS. SCHENCK & HEWSON, Newark Delegates.

Gentlemen, The accompanying document is in reply to the queries proposed by yourselves and Mr. Scott of New York, in relation to the present state of the population of this town. Though from the shortness of the time allowed us we could not make that information perfectly satisfactorily, yet we have endeavored to be within the bounds of truth than risk the shadow of a chance of exceeding it. We have based part of our Report besides other information, on the attested evidence of two individuals, each having five children of his family employed in the factories. With great respect we subscribe ourselves, yours sincerely,

JOHN TILBY, JOHN K. FLOOD.

Question 1st. What number of mills are idle in consequence of the strike? *Answer.* The number is 19 cotton mills, and 1 woolen factory.

Question 2d. What number of children are idle in consequence of the strike? *Answer.* It would take some weeks to ascertain the number of minors; the whole number employed in these factories, is from 19 to 20 hundred; the number of hand-loom weavers and

others dependent on the factories would swell the amount of persons thrown out of work, much more.

Questions 3 and 4. What number of children are under 12 years? What number are over 12 years? *Answer.* We have placed these two queries together, because, like the question above, we could not ascertain without an actual personal survey of the town. Doctor Fisher, who formerly took the census, and which he has said employed him nearly six weeks, reported in 1832, the whole number of population under 16 years of age, at 3949; we consider it would be within compass to take the sixth part as engaged in manufacturing—say 600 under 16 years.

Question 5. What average compensation for those under 12? *Answer.* From 50 cents to \$1.75 per week—average \$1.12½.

Question 6. What average compensation for those over 12? *Answer.* Many of those work by the piece, as rulers, weavers, warpers, &c. As near as we can learn, the average is \$2.12½ per week. In reference to this question, we send you two statements on oath of the wages obtained by the individuals in those two families (five in each) in one of which you will see they are all over 12 years and average \$2.10. In this statement we do not include spinners and sub bosses, but only such as may be considered minors among the male sex; but also includes among the females, many grown women.

Question 7. What time do they commence work in summer? *Question 10.* What time do they quit in the evening? *Answer.* From sun-rise to sun-set from March first to October 1st.

Question 8. What time is allowed for breakfast? *Answer.* In summer, half an hour. From October 1st to the 15th March, no time allowed. The hands breakfast by candle-light before going to work.

Question 9. What time is allowed for dinner? *Answer.* Three quarters of an hour, the year round.

Question 11. The same queries in reference to the winter season. *Answer.* From October 1st to March 1st, commence at daylight to quit at 8 o'clock; in which some mills are very precise; others overrun that time, probably on account of the difference of clocks.

Question 12. What number are in destitute circumstances? *Answer.* In consequence of the strike, many have left the town. The whole who remain may be said to be destitute. Doctor Fisher in his last census, 1831, stated the number of widows to be 163, and the amount of their families to be 834. Now these are precisely the class of persons who cannot remove in case of a strike, or of being thrown out of work from any other cause; and as the town was more populous as well as more prosperous at the commencement of the strike, than it was in 1832, being the time of cholera, we believe we are within compass to say there are 1000 persons in need of assistance.

State of New Jersey, Essex County, ss.

Personally appeared before me, John K. Flood, one of the Justices of the Peace for said county, Joseph D. Edwards, who being duly sworn on his oath, doth depose and say that he had five children working in the factories at the time of the present "strike" for a reduction of the hours of labor, that their ages were about as follows, viz: one 20 years of age, one 18, one 14, one 12, and one 10—that four were girls and received as follows: the one aged 20 two dollars per week, the one aged 18 two dollars, the one aged 14 two dollars, the one aged 10 forty-four cents per week, that one was a boy aged about 12 who received one dollar and twenty-five cents per week.

JOSEPH D. EDWARDS.

Taken and subscribed before me this 11th day of Aug,
1835. JOHN K. FLOOD, Justice of the Peace.

State of New Jersey, Essex County, ss.

Personally appeared before me, John K. Flood, one of the Justices of the Peace in and for said county, William H. Campbell, who, being duly sworn doth depose and say that he had five children (one of which was a boarder) working in the factories at the time of the present strike for a reduction of the hours of labor, whose ages were about as follows, viz: one 18, one 19, one 15, one 13 and one 13 – that the one aged 19 received two dollars and twenty-five cents per week; the one aged 15, two dollars per week; the one aged 13 one dollar and fifty cents per week; that two were girls, aged 18 and 13, that the one aged 18 received two dollars and seventy-five cents, and the one aged 13, two dollars per week, and further saith not. WILLIAM H. CAMPBELL.

Taken and subscribed before me this 11th day of Aug.,
1835. JOHN K. FLOOD, Justice of the Peace.

5. APPRENTICESHIP

(a) LEGAL ASPECTS

Carey, Mathew. *Select Excerpta*, vol. x, 338-340.

This is from a collection of newspaper clippings made by Mathew Carey and preserved in the Ridgway Branch of the Library Company, Philadelphia. Unfortunately these clippings are undated and not labeled with the names of the papers from which they were taken.

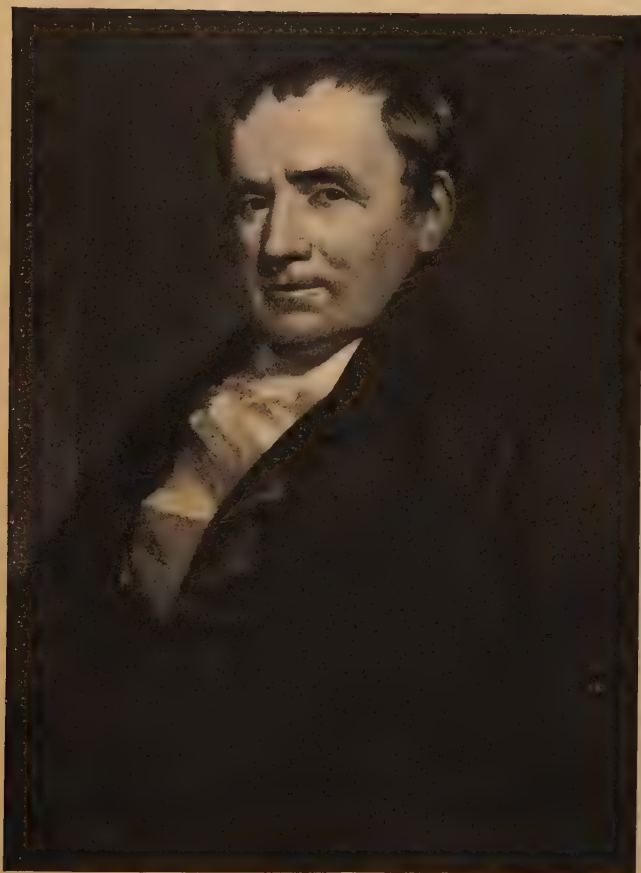
NEW YORK COMMON PLEAS: Andrew Deitz vs. John Tate. This cause was tried at the last term of the Common Pleas, and was brought to recover damages for the defendant's breach of his covenant, in an indenture of apprenticeship. The defendant was a saddler and harness maker, and had contracted to teach the plaintiff the art and mystery of those branches of business. The plaintiff had served his master for the term mentioned in the indentures, and at the expiration thereof brought the present action, averring that he had not been taught the business of harness making, and was not sufficiently instructed to make first rate saddles, having been kept at work at those of an inferior quality during the greater portion of his apprenticeship.

The defendant vested his defence chiefly on proof, that the plaintiff had declined working at, because he disliked the business of harness making; and, secondly, that his work during the term of the apprenticeship, was very much confined to the manufacture of inferior saddles; that he could not be expected to travel out of the line of his business, merely for the purpose of instructing the plaintiff in making the first rate saddles.

His honor Judge Irving, in his charge to the Jury, dwelt with great force on the interesting nature of this suit, as well to the parties as the public at large. It was of vital importance to bind parties to the most faith-

ful observance of contracts of this description, because upon it, as far as they are concerned, mainly depends the good government and prosperity of the community. He thought the disinclining of the boy to learn his trade, or the mere convenience of his master, could never be urged as a defence to an action of this description. Boys, if indulged, would perhaps generally be disinclined to the industry and labour necessary to acquire the mechanic arts. The master is armed with authority sufficient to prevent or correct any misconduct of that description in his apprentice. He is allowed, like a parent, to chastise the apprentice, and should he become refractory, he may call on the police, whom the law requires to interfere and imprison in such cases; and if such pertinacity continues, the master for that cause alone may be absolved from his indenture. With these means provided for him, he should never be allowed to waste and make worthless the whole term of an apprenticeship, and at the expiration of it answer to the parent or guardian of the child, I would have taught him by my trade but he was disinclined to learn.

Nor should the other branch of his defence avail him, for if a master should contract to instruct his apprentice to manufacture a particular article, it should not serve him to say, that it was not convenient, or not in the line of his business. He ought to consider this at the time he contracts; but having made his contract, we are all deeply interested in requiring him to perform it. Those years during which the master generally has controul over his apprentice, may be regarded as the golden period of his life; and if unimproved, he reaches manhood unable to pursue, and quite as unwilling then to learn any trade, or calling whatever. The consequences are inevitable—he becomes a burthen instead of a blessing to the community.



MATHEW CAREY

First American investigator of Woman's Work and consistent champion
of Working Women, 1828-1839

(From Sartain's engraving of Nagle's portrait, painted about 1825)

The law governing this important relationship, is as reasonable as it is useful. It exacts no impossibility of the master, and he ought always to be protected, unless satisfactory evidence of his neglect of duty should be given to the jury. If, however, the jury believed that such neglect had been proved in the present case, it would be their duty to find for the plaintiff. The amount of damages it would be exclusively their province to determine. The jury found a verdict for the plaintiff—Damages, \$400. E. W. King, and Price, for plaintiff, Anthon, for defendant.

(b) RUNAWAYS

Philadelphia National Gazette, Oct. 13, 1830, p. 3, col. 1.

FORTY DOLLARS REWARD. Ran away from the subscriber an indented apprentice to the Cordwainer's business, named John Donnelly, about 18 years of age, thin visage, light complexion, remarkably freckled, uncommonly so on his face, hands and body, and has a large mark on his right or left side, occasioned by the shingles. His hair is sandy colored, and he is about 5 feet, 7 inches high. He took away with him a long blue coat, 1 pair dark mixture trousers, 1 pair white pantaloons, 1 white waistcoat and other clothing. \$20 will be paid for him if lodged in any jail where the subscriber may again obtain him, or \$40 if brought home to the subscriber. It is expected that he will endeavor to go to sea. Captains of vessels and all other persons are warned not to receive or harbor said runaway at their peril, as they will be dealt with in such cases according to law.

JEREMIAH DEGRASS, No. 355 South Second Street.

Mechanics' Free Press, Feb. 6, 1830, p. 3, col. 6.

ONE CENT REWARD. Ran away on the 9th of October last, an indented apprentice to the Whip and Cane business, named David R. Cole. The above reward will

be paid for his apprehension, but no charges. All persons are forbid harbouring him at their peril.

GEORGE W. BURGESS.

(c) ABUSES OF THE SYSTEM

Mechanics' Free Press, Nov. 29, 1828, p. 2, col. 4, 5.

MASTERS AND APPRENTICES. MESSRS. EDITORS—The practice of many master mechanics in this city, in employing none but apprentices in their manufacturing establishments, is an evil severely felt by the journeymen of all denominations; for whenever there is a greater number of mechanics than the demand of labour requires, it is evident the surplus must be thrown out of employ. There are men in this city who have from 15 to 20 apprentices, who never or very seldom have a journeyman in their shops; but to supply the place of journeymen, and to monopolize to themselves trade and wealth, as one apprentice becomes free, another is taken to fill up the ranks. Let us for a moment view the bad effects of this monopolizing policy—I say bad effects because I conceive that whatever system shall be adopted to enrich one man at the expense of the many, must be bad, and destructive to the public good.

When we bind our sons for five, six or seven years, to learn a trade, it is with an idea that when he has faithfully served out the term of his apprenticeship, he will be enabled at least to find employment as a journeyman. This reasonable expectation very often ends in disappointment; for the very moment he assumes his independence his troubles begin: he is thrown out of employment by his parsimonious and ungenerous master, with whom no consideration of past services has any weight, and whose heart can melt at the sight of nothing but money.

Hence you see a young man of honest deportment and

industrious habits, thrown upon the wide world, in the bloom of youth, without money, without friends, and without credit: and if he has friends, it often happens they are unable to help him. He applies to the man with whom he has faithfully served his time for employment, but finds none, he goes to others, and is frequently told they transact all their business by the aid of apprentices—here his spirits begin to droop, and his industrious habits and laudable ambition are nipped in the bud. He must now either turn his attention to some laborious work, to which he has not been accustomed, and which is at times difficult to obtain, or turn vagabond at once. It is no wonder that so many young men, under such unfavorable circumstances, are ruined in their morals and reputations, and the world is too apt to throw all the blame upon the unfortunate, while they pass over with impunity the causes that produced it.

There are other master mechanics who are less fortunate than the former; they do much injury to society, without enriching or benefiting themselves. These are men who manufacture goods altogether by apprentices, and sell them at so very low a rate, that they can scarcely live by the profits.

One of the above description was selling some hats, some time ago, and another of the trade asked him how he could afford to sell them so very low. His answer was, that if he had not had them manufactured altogether by apprentices, he could not have afforded to have sold them for anything like the price. These men appear to me to injure others without benefiting themselves.

I hope, Messrs. Editors, that some philanthropic spirit will dictate some lawful means to eradicate and destroy such deadly poison, circulated throughout the veins of society, and if it cannot be finally rooted out, let us

employ the best antidote we can. Let us do good in our day and generation, by establishing societies for the protection and help of such unfortunate young men as I have already sufficiently spoken of. If all were master mechanics, there would be no more labour performed than there is at present; but there would be a more equal distribution of the profits of that labour among the members of society; and consequently would destroy the powerful influence of monopolists. CANDIDUS.

II

THE MECHANICS' UNION OF TRADE ASSOCIATIONS AND THE PHILADELPHIA POLITICAL MOVEMENT

INTRODUCTION

The first labor movement involving more than a single trade in the United States grew out of the failure of a strike of journeymen carpenters for a ten-hour day in Philadelphia in the summer of 1827. The carpenters were joined in their demand for ten hours by the bricklayers, and perhaps also by the Journeymen House Painters and Glazers who issued a call for a meeting about this time. The master carpenters advertised for journeymen to come to the city, stating that three or four hundred hands could find immediate employment, and this measure probably caused the defeat of the strike. But the next year the journeymen appear to have attained their object.

The spirit of resistance was roused by the struggle during the summer of 1827. Other trades became interested, and soon afterwards the working men of the city determined to form a central organization for aid and protection in similar difficulties. As a result of this determination there came into existence, late in 1827, the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations, the first city central union in the United States, if not in the world. This organization proved, however, not the beginning of a trade union movement, but the beginning of a political movement.

Some six or eight months after its organization, indeed, the Mechanics' Union decided that it was necessary for the working men to go into politics to obtain their rights, and a little later took the initial steps toward the organization of a Working Men's Party. It appears

to have attempted, however, to maintain its own separate existence as a trades' union at the same time that it fostered the political movement. On October 4, 1828, the *Mechanics' Free Press* announced a meeting of the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations to consider "business of the greatest importance." Gradually, however, it lost vitality, and it probably existed for little more than a year. Though at one time it was said to have embraced fifteen societies, at the time of its final meeting the number had been reduced to four.¹⁸

The political movement, however, lasted from 1828 until after the fall election of 1831. For four years candidates were regularly nominated, and political addresses issued by the working men. At the fall election in 1828, the working men's candidates received from 239 to 539 votes, while the Jackson candidates received 3,800 to 7,000 votes, and the Administration candidates 2,500 to 3,800 votes. Of the thirty-nine candidates nominated by the working men, nineteen were also on the Jackson ticket and ten on the Adams ticket. "The result," said the *Mechanics' Free Press*,¹⁹ "has been equal to our most sanguine expectations; yet it may not be equally as satisfactory to our friends; but," the editors continued, "when they consider the unprecedented height of party excitement; the false, slanderous and malicious reports, industriously circulated by our enemies, together with the want of knowledge among many of our fellow labourers, that there was on the ground a ticket which more directly advocated their cause . . . united this with the treasonable conduct discovered on the part of some of the working men's delegates . . . who can say but we have achieved a triumph?" Much satisfaction was gleaned from the

¹⁸ *The Man*, Sept. 6, 1834.

¹⁹ *Mechanics' Free Press*, Oct. 18, 1828.

fact, that, while they had disavowed any attempt to influence the national election, yet the two candidates for Congress openly acknowledged "the justice of the working peoples' attempts to lessen the established hours of daily labour." Their election bills exhibited, in conspicuous characters, the words "From Six to Six," Both the great political parties had attached to their carriages these words: "The Working Men's Ticket," coupled with the names of Jackson and Adams.

Before the next campaign the working men had organized a large number of political clubs in the different wards and districts, and had greatly strengthened their position. In the fall of 1829, of the thirty-two candidates nominated on the city ticket, nine were endorsed by the Federal Party and three by the Democratic Party. Of the nine county candidates three were endorsed by the Federal Party and none by the Democratic Party. Sixteen of the working men's candidates, and all except one of those who were also candidates of either of the other parties, were elected. The working men cast nearly two thousand four hundred votes, between eight and nine hundred in the city and over one thousand four hundred in the country. Thus the Working Men's Party acquired the balance of power, and the Federal Party profited most by alliance with it.

In 1830, however, just when the working men of Philadelphia were appealing to their brothers throughout the state of Pennsylvania to join their movement, difficulties and dangers began to multiply. The selection of candidates, though carried on apparently with extreme care, appears to have led to many pitfalls, and the Democrats continually asserted that the working men were merely a wing of the Federal Party. In the Northern Liberties a meeting of Democratic working

men denounced the Working Men's Party, and on the eve of the election the *American Sentinel* declared that the Philadelphia party endorsed the principles of Frances Wright and Thomas Skidmore of New York, and by implication, at least, that its candidates were atheists and agrarians. In the election, though the exclusive working men's candidates received from 812 to 1,047 votes, the Democratic ticket was victorious over the coalition candidates of the administration and working men. The latter's joint candidate for Congress received less than one third of the votes. The total voting strength of the Working Men's Party in both the city and county increased by about 300 votes over 1829, and in the Northern Liberties the working men elected eight candidates for county commissioner. The eight candidates for the Common Council and the Assembly who were first nominated by the working men and later by the Democrats were also elected.

In the fall election of 1831, the candidates for city offices who were exclusively on the working men's ticket received less than 400 votes, but the county candidates for Assembly seem to have received from 1316 to 1800 votes.²⁰ This was the last year in which the workingmen's party nominated candidates. Their withdrawal from the field appears, however, not to have been due to defeat, but to two other causes: first, discouragement over inability to increase the voting strength of the party beyond a certain fixed point; and second, the overshadowing importance during the next year of questions of national politics, upon which the working men had from the beginning declared themselves neutral.

One of the interesting developments of this period of political agitation was Josiah Warren's plan of coöper-

²⁰ Poulson's *American Daily Advertiser* (Philadelphia), Oct. 13, 1831.

eration or the "equal return of labour for labour."²¹ This scheme was founded upon a purely anarchistic theory of voluntary action and entitles its originator to be called the first American anarchist. Retail stores based upon this principle were put into operation in Cincinnati and Philadelphia, and later the experiment was tried in other places.

²¹ The theory is perhaps best explained in a book by Stephen Pearl Andrews, a disciple of Warren, entitled "The Science of Society," though Warren himself wrote a number of pamphlets, the most important being his *Periodical Letters of Progress*. See *Bailie, Josiah Warren* (Boston, 1906).

I. THE FIRST CITY CENTRAL ORGANIZATION

(a) ITS ORIGIN

(1) The Journeymen Carpenters demand a Ten-hour Day.

Preamble and Resolutions adopted at a meeting of journeymen house-carpenters, June 14, 1827, from the *Democratic Press* (Phila.), June 14, 1827, p. 2, col. 1.

. . . Whereas, all men have a right to assemble in a peaceable and orderly manner, for the purpose of deliberating on their own and the public good: And, whereas, the Journeymen house carpenters, of the city and county of Philadelphia, have for a long time suffered under a grievous and slave like system of labour, which they believe to be attended with many evils injurious alike to the community and the workmen; they believe that a man of common constitution is unable to perform more than ten hours faithful labour in one day, and that men in the habit of labouring from sun rise until dark, are generally subject to nervous and other complaints; arising from continued hard labour and they believe that all men have a just right, derived from their Creator, to have sufficient time in each day for the cultivation of their mind and for self improvement; Therefore, resolved, that we think ten hours industriously employed are sufficient for a day's labour.

The above resolution being unanimously adopted, it was resolved, that it be carried into effect from this day. . .

WILLIAM LOUCK Chairman

CHARLES FERRIS, Secretary

Philadelphia, June 13th, 1827.

(2) The Employers resist the Demand.

Preamble and resolutions adopted at a meeting of master carpenters,
June 15, 1827, from Poulson's *American Daily Advertiser* (Phila.),
June 18, 1827, p. 3, col. 4.

. . . Whereas, the journeymen House Carpenters of the city and county of Philadelphia have entered into a combination and passed certain resolutions, not to labour longer than from six o'clock in the morning to six o'clock in the evening, thereby depriving their employers of about one fifth part of their usual time:

Therefore, resolved, that in the opinion of this meeting it is inexpedient and altogether improper to comply with the resolutions passed by the Journeymen House Carpenters, at their late meeting, held at the Mayor's court room.

RESOLVED, that we view with regret the formation of any society that has a tendency to subvert good order, and coerce or mislead those who have been industriously pursuing their avocation and honestly maintaining their families.

RESOLVED, that the present price per day given to Journeymen Carpenters, is as high as can be afforded by their employers, when the whole time of the workman is given.

RESOLVED, that we will not employ any Journeyman who will not give his time and labour as usual; inasmuch as we believe the present mode has not been, and is not now, oppressive to the workmen.

RESOLVED, that we mutually pledge ourselves to support and fully carry into effect the foregoing resolutions.

RESOLVED, that the Master Carpenters composing this meeting, request of their employers a co-operation in the above measure.

RESOLVED, that the Master Carpenters composing this meeting give their names to the Secretary; when the

following was the result: (Number of Signatures—122.)

RESOLVED, that a committee of 12 persons be appointed to call on the Master Carpenters who were unable to attend this meeting to procure their signatures. . . .

JOSEPH SMITH, Chairman—JOSEPH MOORE, Secretary.

(3) The Reply of the Journeymen.

Democratic Press, June 20, 1827, p. 2, col. 2.

ADDRESS. FELLOW CITIZENS: Having read in the papers a report of the proceedings of the master carpenters of the city and county of Philadelphia, held at the Carpenters' Hall, on Friday the 15th inst. and finding they have entered into a compact, and pledged themselves mutually by giving their names, and causing them to be published, not to comply with the request of the journeymen, merely because they think it inexpedient and improper; and have also appointed a committee to call upon those employers who did not attend this meeting, (as there are many who are in favour of the journeymen) to persuade them to join this alliance for the express purpose of forcing the journeymen into a compliance, with their desires; also requesting the cooperation of the citizens in their designs; we, the journeymen house carpenters of the city and county of Philadelphia, do appeal to the citizens of this place in behalf of ourselves against our employers, as they have published what we consider improper and untrue. They say we are depriving them of a fifth part of the usual time of working, it is a miscalculation: in the longest day in summer there are but 15 hours sun, and deducting 2 hours for meals, leaves 13 hours for work; in the shortest day there is but 9 hours sun, and of course 8 hours work averaging, $10\frac{1}{2}$ throughout the year, now we propose to work 10 hours during the summer, and as long as we can see in the winter, taking only one hour

for dinner, and we can accomplish nearly 9 hours work in this manner in the shortest day. The average is $9\frac{1}{2}$ hours; thus their loss would be but about one 12th part of the time, and we maintain not any in the work. They say they view with regret our proceedings, but, fellow citizens, why do they say so? It is because they are aware if this alteration takes place, it will deprive them of the power they have hitherto had of employing a man during the summer, in the long days, and either discharging him in the winter, or reducing his wages, as it will make a journeyman of nearly as much value in the winter as in the summer. This is the reason why they say it is inexpedient and improper; but fellow citizens, are we not men as well as they, and freemen too; do we not contribute to the welfare and protection of our country as much as they do? You know we do, and we are confident instead of co-operating with our employers, you will agree with us in the justice as well as reasonableness of our request. Citizens of Philadelphia, to you we appeal, with you rests the ultimate success, or failure, of our cause, will you not assist us. Remember we are men of like passions with yourselves, and say will you combine with our employers to force us to be slaves.

THE JOURNEYMEN HOUSE CARPENTERS.

(4) They decide to strike.

Resolutions adopted at a meeting of journeymen house-carpenters, June 18, 1827, from the *Philadelphia Freeman's Journal*, June 15, 1827.

. . . RESOLVED, that we refrain from all labours as House Carpenters, until the business becomes regulated by corresponding committees.

RESOLVED, that there be a committee of twelve appointed for the purpose of negotiating with any committee of Master Carpenters, which they may think proper to appoint. Likewise, for the purpose of receiving any proposals from the citizens for the execu-

tion of carpenter's work, which they will undertake on reasonable terms, and execute in a workmanlike manner. Also, for distributing their funds to those poor Journeymen House Carpenters who stand in need of assistance during the stand out. . . .

WILLIAM LAUCK, Chairman

CHARLES FERRIS, Secretary

(b) PREAMBLE OF THE MECHANICS' UNION OF
TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

Mechanics' Free Press, Oct. 25, 1828, p. 1, col. 1-3. This was not published until about a year after the organization of the association, when the *Mechanics' Free Press* had been established as the organ of the working men.

When the disposition and efforts of one part of mankind to oppress another, have become too manifest to be mistaken and too pernicious in their consequences to be endured, it has often been found necessary for those who feel aggrieved, to associate, for the purpose of affording to each other mutual protection from oppression.

We, the Journeymen Mechanics of the City and County of Philadelphia, conscious that our condition in society is lower than justice demands it should be, and feeling our inability, individually, to ward off from ourselves and families those numerous evils which result from an unequal and very excessive accumulation of wealth and power into the hands of a few, are desirous of forming an Association, which shall avert as much as possible those evils with which poverty and incessant toil have already inflicted, and which threaten ultimately to overwhelm and destroy us. And in order that our views may be properly understood, and the justness of our intention duly appreciated, we offer to the public the following summary of our reasons, principles and objects.

If unceasing toils were actually requisite to supply us with a bare, and in many instances wretched, subsistence; if the products of our industry or an equitable proportion of them, were appropriated to our actual wants and comfort, then would we yield without a murmur to the stern and irrevocable decree of necessity. But this is infinitely wide of the fact. We appeal to the most intelligent of every community, and ask—Do not you, and all society, depend solely for subsistence on the products of human industry? Do not those who labour, while acquiring to themselves thereby only a scanty and penurious support, likewise maintain in affluence and luxury the rich who never labour?

Do not all the streams of wealth which flow in every direction and are emptied into and absorbed by the coffers of the unproductive, exclusively take their rise in the bones, marrow, and muscles of the industrious classes? In return for which, exclusive of a bare subsistence, (which likewise is the product of their own industry,) they receive—not any thing!

Is it just? Is it equitable that we should waste the energies of our minds and bodies, and be placed in a situation of such unceasing exertion and servility as must necessarily, in time, render the benefits of our liberal institutions to us inaccessible and useless, in order that the products of our labour may be accumulated by a few into vast pernicious masses, calculated to prepare the minds of the possessors for the exercise of lawless rule and despotism, to overawe the meagre multitude, and fright away that shadow of freedom which still lingers among us? Are we who confer almost every blessing on society, never to be treated as freemen and equals, and never be accounted worthy of an equivalent, in return for the products of our industry? Has the Being who created us, given us existence only with the design

of making it a curse and a burthen to us, while at the same time, he has conferred upon us a power with which ten-fold more of blessings can be created than it is possible for society either to enjoy or consume? No! at the present period, when wealth is so easily and abundantly created that the markets of the world are overflowing with it, and when, in consequence thereof, and of the continual development and increase of Scientific Power, the demand for human labour is gradually and inevitably diminishing, it cannot be necessary that we, or any portion of society should be subjected to perpetual slavery. But a ray of intelligence on this subject has gone forth through the working world, which the ignorance and injustice of oppressors, aided by the most powerful and opposing interests cannot extinguish; and in consequence thereof, the day of human emancipation from haggard penury and incessant toil is already dawning. The spirit of freedom is diffusing itself through a wider circle of human intellect, it is expanding in the bosoms of the mass of mankind, and preparing them to cast off the yoke of oppression and servility, wherever and by whatever means it has been riveted upon them.

As freemen and republicans, we feel it a duty incumbent on us to make known our sentiments fearlessly and faithfully on any subject connected with the general welfare; and we are prepared to maintain, that all who toil have a natural and unalienable right to reap the fruits of their own industry; and that they who by labour (the only source) are the authors of every comfort, convenience and luxury, are in justice entitled to an equal participation, not only in the meanest and the coarsest, but likewise the richest and the choicest of them all.

The principles upon which the institution shall be

founded, are principles, alike, of the strictest justice, and the most extended philanthropy. Believing that, whatever is conducive to the real prosperity of the greatest numbers, must in the nature of things conduce to the happiness of all; we cannot desire to injure nor take the smallest unjust advantage, either of that class of the community called employers or of any other portion. It is neither our intention nor desire to extort inequitable prices for our labour; all we may demand for this shall not exceed what can be clearly demonstrated to be a fair and full equivalent. If we demand more we wrong the society of which we are members, and if society require us to receive less, she injures and oppresses us.

With respect to the relation existing between employers and the employed, we are prepared, we think, to demonstrate, that it is only through an extremely limited view of their real interests, that the former can be induced to attempt to depreciate the value of human labour. The workman is not more dependent upon his wages for the support of his family than they are upon the demand for the various articles they fabricate or vend. If the mass of the people were enabled by their labour to procure for themselves and families a full and abundant supply of the comforts and conveniences of life, the consumption of articles, particularly of dwellings, furniture and clothing, would amount to at least twice the quantity it does at present, and of course the demand, by which alone employers are enabled either to subsist or accumulate, would likewise be increased in an equal proportion. Each would be enabled to effect twice the quantity of sales or loans which he can effect at present, and the whole industry of a people, consisting of their entire productive powers, whether manual or scientific, together with all their capital, might be

put into a full, healthful, and profitable action. The workman need not languish for want of employment, the vender for sales, nor the capitalist complain for want of profitable modes of investment. It is therefore the real interest (for instance) of the Hatter, that every man in the community should be enabled to clothe his own head and those of his family with an abundant supply of the best articles of that description; because the flourishing demand, thereby created, and which depends altogether on the ability of the multitude to purchase, is that which alone enables him to pay his rent and support his family in comfort.

The same may be said with respect to the Tailor, the Shoemaker, the Carpenter, the Cabinetmaker, the Builder, and indeed of every other individual in society, who depends for subsistence or accumulation upon the employment of his skill, his labour, or his capital. All are dependent on the demand which there is for the use of their skill, service, or capital, and the demand must ever be regulated by the ability or inability of the great mass of the people to purchase and consume. If, therefore, as members of the community, they are desirous to prosper, in vain will they expect to succeed, unless the great body of the community is kept in a healthy, vigorous and prosperous condition.

No greater error exists in the world than the notion that society will be benefited by deprecating the value of human labour. Let this principle (as at this day in England) be carried towards its full extent, and it is in vain that scientific power shall pour forth its inexhaustible treasures of wealth upon the world. Its products will all be amassed to glut the over-flowing storehouses, and useless hoards of its insatiable monopolizers; while the mechanic and productive classes, who constitute the great mass of the population, and who

have wielded the power and laboured in the production of this immense abundance, having no other resource for subsistence than what they derive from the miserable pittance, which they are compelled by competition to receive in exchange for their inestimable labour, must first begin to pine, languish, and suffer under its destructive and withering influence. But the evil stops not here. The middling classes next, venders of the products of human industry, will begin to experience its deleterious effects. The demand for their articles must necessarily cease from the forced inability of the people to consume: trade must in consequence languish, and losses and failures become the order of the day. At last the contagion will reach the capitalist, throned as he is, in the midst of his ill gotten abundance, and his capital, from the most evident and certain causes, will become useless, unemployed and stagnant, himself the trembling victim of continual alarms from robberies, burnings, and murder, the unhappy and perhaps ill fated object of innumerable imprecations, insults and implacable hatred from the wronged, impoverished, and despairing multitude. The experience of the most commercial parts of the world sufficiently demonstrates that this is the natural, inevitable, and, shall we not say, righteous consequences of a principle, whose origin is injustice and an unrighteous depreciation of the value and abstraction of the products of human labour—a principle which in its ultimate effects, must be productive of universal ruin and misery, and destroy alike the happiness of every class and individual in society.

The real object, therefore, of this association, is to avert, if possible, the desolating evils which must inevitably arise from a depreciation of the intrinsic value of human labour; to raise the mechanical and productive classes to that condition of true independence and ine-

quality [*sic*] which their practical skill and ingenuity, their immense utility to the nation and their growing intelligence are beginning imperiously to demand: to promote, equally, the happiness, prosperity and welfare of the whole community—to aid in conferring a due and full proportion of that invaluable promoter of happiness, leisure, upon all its useful members; and to assist, in conjunction with such other institutions of this nature as shall hereafter be formed throughout the union, in establishing a just balance of power, both mental, moral, political and scientific, between all the various classes and individuals which constitute society at large.

(c) THE ENTRANCE INTO POLITICS

Mechanics' Free Press, July 5, 1828, p. 3, col. 5.

At a very large and respectable meeting of Journey-men House Carpenters, held on Tuesday evening, July 1st, at the District Court Room, information was communicated by the delegates, that the Mechanics' Union of Trade Associations is entering into measures for procuring a nomination of candidates for legislative and other public offices, who will support the interest of the working classes: an expression of opinion and sentiments on this subject having been called for, it was unanimously resolved, that we entertain the most heart-felt satisfaction and approbation for the measures in contemplation, by the said "Mechanics' Union Association," and will use every exertion to carry the said measure into effect.

T. H. GOUCHER, Sec'ry.

2. THE WORKING MEN'S PARTY

(a) THE FIRST GENERAL MEETING

Mechanics' Free Press, Aug. 16, 1828, p. 3, col. 4, 5. Preamble and resolutions adopted at a public meeting of the working men of the city of Philadelphia, August 11, 1828.

PREAMBLE. Public meetings of the citizens for the purpose of co-operation in the management of Elections have been sanctioned by long established custom; and are generally admitted to be perfectly consistent with the genius and character of popular governments: and in this country particularly it may be safely assumed that what is lawful in such cases for any portion of the community, cannot be less so for the Working Classes.

It has also been a practice with men of similar views and pursuits, to concentrate their strength and talents in order to secure to themselves the political guardianship of their peculiar interests. The advantages resulting from the exercise of this privilege have hitherto escaped the notice of the majority of the working men, who caught by the popular excitement of the day, follow in the wake of their wary leaders, and having mainly contributed to the elevation of their ambitious favourites are doomed to sink again into their former insignificance. With such odds against them their influence as a body has assuredly declined, and with it their rights and privileges. But instructed at length by the experience of past errors and misfortunes, and thoroughly convinced of their undoubted right so to do in such cases, the Mechanics and Working Men of the city and County of Philadelphia, are determined henceforth to take the management of their own interests, as

a class, into their own immediate keeping, and with this view propose the following resolutions preparatory to arrangements for the ensuing General Election.

RESOLVED, that this meeting recommend to the Mechanics & Working Men of the City to support such men only for the City Councils and State Legislature, as shall pledge themselves in their official capacity to support the interests and claims of the Working Classes.

RESOLVED, that we pledge ourselves not to permit the measures growing out of this meeting to interfere with the arrangements of either of the contending parties in relation to the presidential question or congressional election.

RESOLVED, unanimously, that four district meetings of the City be held as follows [here follows list of places and times], for the purpose of choosing delegates to form a ticket for Assembly and City Councils to be supported by Mechanics and Working Men at the next General Election.

RESOLVED, that the delegates so appointed be instructed to make their selections without regard to party politics.

RESOLVED, that this meeting respectfully recommend to the several district meetings to confine themselves in their choice of Delegates entirely to Working Men.

RESOLVED, that a Committee be appointed to designate the place and advertise the same. . . .

GEORGE W. JONES, Chairman—

JOHN NAPIER, JOHN MCMAHON, Sec'rys.
Philadelphia, Aug. 11th.

(b) QUESTIONS ADDRESSED TO CANDIDATES FOR
THE STATE LEGISLATURE

New York *Free Enquirer*, Oct. 7, 1829, pp. 397, 398. This circular letter was sent by the delegates of the working men of Philadelphia to each of the candidates whom they proposed to nominate for the State Legislature.

Sir: The Delegates of the Working Men for the city, having placed your name in the list of fourteen, (from which seven will be chosen) as a candidate for the State Legislature; they are desirous (through the medium of the undersigned committee) to obtain your views in relation to the following subjects:

First. An equal and general system of Education.

Second. The banking system, and all other exclusive monopolies, considered with regard to the good or ill effects produced upon the productive classes by their operations.

Third. Lotteries, whether a total abolishment of them is not essential to the moral as well as pecuniary interest of society. Upon the important subject of Education we wish most distinctly to understand whether you do, or do not consider it essential to the welfare of the rising generation, "That an open school and competent teachers for every child in the state, from the lowest branch of an infant school to the lecture rooms of practical science, should be established, and those who superintend them to be chosen by the people."

Our object in soliciting your views, sir, upon these several important points, is to enable us in the discharge of our duty, as delegates, to select such men for the Legislature, as are willing as well as competent, to legislate upon subjects which the Working Men of the city consider of the greatest importance, not only to themselves but the community at large. If your views should be in accordance with the interests of those we

have the honor to represent, we request you to allow us to place your name on our Ticket. We are very respectfully, Sir, your obedient servants, JOHN THOMASON, THOMAS TAYLOR, WILLIAM ENGLISH, JOHN ASHTON, JR., BENJ. MIFFLIN, Committee.
N.B. An immediate answer is particularly requested.

(c) THE EDUCATION QUESTION

(1) The Report of the Working Men's Committee.

Working Man's Advocate (N.Y.), March 6, 1830, p. 1, col. 3-5; p. 2, col. 1, 2; extract from the *Philadelphia Mechanics' Free Press*. Also copied in *Delaware Free Press*, March 13-27, 1830. This committee was appointed by the working men, and its report, "after much deliberation and some amendments made," was unanimously adopted at a meeting of the "friends of general and equal education." The consideration of the report occupied three evenings, February 4, 8, and 11, 1830.

REPORT of the Joint Committees of the City and County of Philadelphia, appointed September, 1829, to ascertain the state of public instruction in Pennsylvania, and to digest and propose such improvements in education as may be deemed essential to the intellectual and moral prosperity of the people.

It is now nearly five months since the committees were appointed to co-operate on this arduous duty. But the importance of the subject; the time expended in research and enquiry, in order to procure information relative to it; and the multiplied discussions and deliberations necessary to reconcile and correct their own different and sometimes conflicting views, will, they believe, constitute a reasonable apology for this long delay.

After devoting all the attention to the subject, and making every enquiry which their little leisure and ability would permit, they are forced into the conviction, that there is great defect in the educational system of Pennsylvania; and that much remains to be accom-

plished before it will have reached that point of improvement which the resources of the state would justify, and which the intellectual condition of the people and the preservation of our republican institutions demand.

With the exception of this city and county, the city and incorporated borough of Lancaster, and the city of Pittsburgh, erected into "school districts" since 1818, it appears that the entire state is destitute of any provisions for public instruction, except those furnished by the enactment of 1809. This law requires the assessors of the several counties to ascertain and return the number of children whose parents are unable, through poverty, to educate them; and such children are permitted to be instructed at the most convenient schools at the expense of their respective counties.

The provisions of this act, however, are incomplete and frequently inoperative.²² They are, in some instances, but partially executed; in others, perverted and abused—and in many cases entirely and culpably neglected. The funds appropriated by the act, have, in some instances, been embezzled by fraudulent agents; and in others, partial returns of the children have been made, and some have been illegally and intentionally excluded from participating in the provisions of the law. From a parsimonious desire of saving the county funds, the cheapest, and consequently the most inefficient schools have been usually selected by the commissioners of the several counties.

The elementary schools throughout the state are irresponsible institutions, established by individuals, from mere motives of private speculation or gain, who are

²² See the first report of the state of education in Pennsylvania, made to the Pennsylvania Society for the Promotion of Public Schools, 1828.

sometimes destitute of character, and frequently, of the requisite attainments and abilities. From the circumstance of the schools being the absolute property of individuals, no supervision or effectual control can be exercised over them; hence, ignorance, inattention, and even immorality, prevail to a lamentable extent among their teachers.

In some districts, no schools whatever exist! No means whatever of acquiring education are resorted to; while ignorance, and its never failing consequence, crime, are found to prevail in these neglected spots, to a greater extent than in other more favored portions of the state.

The "three school districts," however, which have been alluded to, are not liable to these objections. Much good, in particular, has resulted from the establishment of the first of these, comprising this city and county, and which owes its establishment to the persevering efforts of a few individuals, who, in order to succeed, even so far, were compelled to combat the ignorance, the prejudices, and the pecuniary interests of many active and hostile opponents.

But the principles on which these "school districts" are founded, are yet, in the opinion of the committees, extremely defective and inefficient. Their leading feature is pauperism! They are confined exclusively to the children of the poor, while there are, perhaps, thousands of children whose parents are unable to afford for them, a good private education, yet whose standing, professions or connexions in society effectually exclude them from taking the benefit of a poor law. There are great numbers, even of the poorest parents, who hold a dependence on the public bounty to be incompatible with the rights and liberties of an American citizen, and whose deep and cherished consciousness of indepen-

dence determines them rather to starve the intellect of their offspring, than submit to become the objects of public charity.

There are, also, many poor families, who are totally unable to maintain and clothe their children, while at the schools; and who are compelled to place them, at a very early age, at some kind of labor that may assist in supporting them, or to bind them out as apprentices to relieve themselves entirely of the burthen of their maintenance and education, while the practice formerly universal, of schooling apprentices, has, of late years, greatly diminished and is still diminishing.

Another radical and glaring defect in the existing public school system is the very limited amount of instruction it affords, even to the comparatively small number of youth, who enjoy its benefits. It extends, in no case, further than a tolerable proficiency in reading, writing, and arithmetic, and sometimes to a slight acquaintance with geography. Besides these, the girls are taught a few simple branches of industry. A great proportion of scholars, however, from the causes already enumerated, acquire but a very slight and partial knowledge of these branches.

The present public school system, limited as it is to three solitary school districts, makes no provision for the care and instruction of children under five years old. This class of children is numerous, especially among the poor, and it frequently happens that the parents, or parent, (perhaps a widow) whose only resource for a livelihood is her needle or wash tub, is compelled to keep her elder children from the school to take charge of the younger ones, while her own hands are industriously employed in procuring a subsistence for them. Such instances are far from being rare, and form a very prominent and lamentable drawback on the utility of the

schools in these districts. The care thus bestowed on infants, is insufficient and very partial. They are frequently exposed to the most pernicious influences and impressions. The seeds of vice, thus early scattered over the infant soil, are too often permitted to ripen, as life advances, till they fill society with violence and outrage, and yield an abundant harvest for magdalens and penitentiaries.

An opinion is entertained by many good and wise persons, and supported to a considerable extent, by actual experiment, that proper schools for supplying a judicious infant training, would effectually prevent much of that vicious depravity of character which penal codes and punishments are vainly intended to counteract. Such schools would, at least, relieve, in a great measure, many indigent parents, from the care of children, which in many cases occupies as much of their time as would be necessary to earn the children a subsistence. They would also afford many youth an opportunity of participating in the benefits of the public schools, who otherwise must, of necessity, be detained from them.

From this view of the public instruction in Pennsylvania, it is manifest that, even in "the school districts," to say nothing of the remainder of the state, a very large proportion of youth are either partially or entirely destitute of education.

It is true the state is not without its colleges and universities, several of which have been fostered with liberal supplies from the public purse. Let it be observed, however, that the funds so applied, have been appropriated exclusively for the benefit of the wealthy, who are thereby enabled to procure a liberal education for their children, upon lower terms than it could otherwise be afforded them. Funds thus expended, may serve to en-

gender an aristocracy of talent, and place knowledge, the chief element of power, in the hands of the privileged few; but can never secure the common prosperity of a nation nor confer intellectual as well as political equality on a people.

The original element of despotism is a monopoly of talent, which consigns the multitude to comparative ignorance, and secures the balance of knowledge on the side of the rich and the rulers. If then the healthy existence of a free government be, as the committee believe, rooted in the will of the American people, it follows as a necessary consequence, of a government based upon that will, that this monopoly should be broken up, and that the means of equal knowledge, (the only security for equal liberty) should be rendered, by legal provision, the common property of all classes.

In a republic, the people constitute the government, and by wielding its powers in accordance with the dictates, either of their intelligence or their ignorance; of their judgment or their caprices, are the makers and the rulers of their own good or evil destiny. They frame the laws and create the institutions, that promote their happiness or produce their destruction. If they be wise and intelligent, no laws but what are just and equal will receive their approbation, or be sustained by their suffrages. If they be ignorant and capricious, they will be deceived by mistaken or designing rulers, into the support of laws that are unequal and unjust.

It appears, therefore, to the committees that there can be no real liberty without a wide diffusion of real intelligence; that the members of a republic, should all be alike instructed in the nature and character of their equal rights and duties, as human beings, and as citizens; and that education, instead of being limited as in our public poor schools, to a simple acquaintance with

words and cyphers, should tend, as far as possible, to the production of a just disposition, virtuous habits, and a rational self governing character.

When the committees contemplate their own condition, and that of the great mass of their fellow laborers; when they look around on the glaring inequality of society, they are constrained to believe, that until the means of equal instruction shall be equally secured to all, liberty is but an unmeaning word, and equality an empty shadow, whose substance to be realized must first be planted by an equal education and proper training in the minds, in the habits, in the manners, and in the feelings of the community.

While, however, the committees believe it their duty to exhibit, fully and openly, the main features and principles of a system of education which can alone comport with the spirit of American liberty, and the equal prosperity and happiness of the people, they are not prepared to assert, that the establishment of such a system in its fullness and purity, throughout the state, is by any means attainable at a single step. While they maintain that each human being has an equal right to a full development of all his powers, moral, physical, and intellectual; that the common good of society can never be promoted in its fullness till all shall be equally secured and protected in the enjoyment of this right, and that it is the first great duty of the states, to secure the same to all its members; yet, such is now the degraded state of education in Pennsylvania, compared with what, in the opinion of the committees, education for a free people should be, that they despair of so great a change as must be involved in passing from one to the other, being accomplished suddenly throughout the state. No new system of education could probably be devised with consequences so manifestly beneficial, as

to awaken at once in the public mind, a general conviction and concurrence in the necessity of its universal adoption.

The committees are aware, also, that it is their duty to consult the views, the feelings, and the prejudices, not of a single district or county merely, but of the state in general. The measure which it is their business to propose, is one designed to be of universal extent and influence, and must, to be successful, be based upon the manifest wishes of nearly the whole commonwealth. It is not, therefore, to what would constitute a perfect education only, but also, to what may be rendered practicable—it is not with a view, exclusively, to the kind of education every child of Pennsylvania ought to have, but likewise to what it is possible, under existing circumstances, views, and prejudices, every child of Pennsylvania may and can have, that they have drawn up a bill or outline of what they deem a system of public education, adapted to the present condition and necessities of the state in general.

The principal points in which the bill for establishing common schools, accompanying this report, differs from the existing system of free schools, are as follows:

1. Its provisions, instead of being limited to three single districts, are designed to extend throughout the commonwealth.
- 2d. It places the managers of the public schools, immediately under the control and suffrage of the people.
- 3d. Its benefits and privileges will not, as at present, be limited as an act of charity to the poor alone, but will extend equally and of right to all classes, and be supported at the expense of all.
- 4th. It lays a foundation for infantile, as well as juvenile instruction.

And lastly, it leaves the door open to every possible improvement which human benevolence and ingenuity may be able to introduce.

While, however, the committees would urge the establishment of common elementary schools throughout the state, as comprising, perhaps, the best general system of education which is at present attainable, it is but just to exhibit, also, some of the defects as well as the advantages of such schools; and to suggest such further measures as appear calculated to obviate such defects.

The instruction afforded by common schools, such as are contemplated in the bill for a general system of education, being only elementary, must, of necessity, produce but a very limited development of the human faculties. It would indeed diminish, but could not destroy, the present injurious monopoly of talent. While the higher branches of literature and science remain accessible only to the children of the wealthy, there must still be a balance of knowledge, and with it a "balance of power," in the hands of the privileged few, the rich and the rulers.

Another radical defect in the best system of common schools yet established, will be found in its not being adapted to meet the wants and necessities of those who stand most in need of it. Very many of the poorest parents are totally unable to clothe and maintain their children while at school, and are compelled to employ their time, while yet very young, in aiding to procure a subsistence. In the city of New York, a much more efficient system of education exists than in this city, and common schools have been in successful operation for the last ten or twelve years; yet there are at the present time upwards of 24,000 children between the ages of 5 and 15 years, who attend no schools whatever, and this apparently criminal neglect of attending the schools is traced, chiefly, to the circumstance just mentioned. It is evidently therefore, of no avail, how free the schools may be, while those children who stand most in need

of them, are, through the necessity of their parents, either retained from them altogether, or withdrawn at an improper age, to assist in procuring a subsistence.

The constitution of this state declares that "the legislature shall provide schools in which the poor may be taught gratis." If this signifies that the poor shall have an opportunity afforded for instruction, it must involve means equal to the end. The poverty of the poor must be no obstruction, otherwise the constitution is a dead letter—nay, worse, an insult on their unfortunate condition and feelings.

The committees, therefore, believe, that one school, at least, should be established in each county, in which some principle should be adopted, calculated to obviate the defects that have been alluded to, and by which the children of all who desire it, may be enabled to procure, at their own expense, a liberal and scientific education. They are of the opinion that a principle fully calculated to secure this object, will be found in a union of agricultural and mechanical with literary and scientific instruction; and they have therefore, in addition to a plan of common elementary schools, drawn up and appended to this report, the substance of a bill providing for the establishment of high schools, or model schools, based upon this principle, which they also present for public deliberation.

Believing, as the committees do, that upon an equal education and proper training to industry, sobriety, and virtue, hangs the liberty and prosperity of the new world, and, perhaps, the ultimate emancipation of the old; and believing, as they do, that the union of industry with literature and science constitutes the only desideratum by which an equal education can be supplied and secured to all classes, they experience the most sincere pleasure in discovering that this good and great prin-

ciple is gaining in popularity and dominion throughout the world. Not only are institutions of this kind established in France, Prussia, Germany, and Great Britain, in imitation of the original Hofwyl institutions in Switzerland, but in the United States, also, there are several. At Whitesborough, N.Y., there is one with from 30 to 40 pupils; at Princeton, Ky., another containing 80; a third exists at Andover, Mass., that accommodates 60 pupils; a fourth at Maysville, Tenn.; and a fifth has recently been established at Germantown, in this county. At Monmouth, N.J., and at Cincinnati, Ohio, very extensive establishments, based upon this principle, have been or are about commencing.

The Germantown establishment had been commenced only seven months when its first report was made, in November last. The pupils are instructed in literature, the sciences, languages, morals, and manual labor. The latter consists of agriculture, gardening, and some mechanic arts. They are permitted to labor little or much, as their dispositions may incline them or their necessities dictate. The institution, at its commencement, on the 1st of May, 1829, had but four pupils—at the date of the report it had 25. By an estimate made by the board of managers, as early as July last, it appeared that the balances against several of them for board and tuition were but very small, and that some of them, by their labor, had almost cleared their expenses. They generally work from two to five hours per day.

The first institution in which manual labor appears to have been combined with literature and science, was established many years since by Fellenberg, at Hofwyl, in the Canton of Bern, Switzerland.

The pupils of this institution, in addition to a common or elementary education, were instructed in almost every branch of literature and science. They were

taught agriculture, gardening, and the mechanic arts, and their choice of the latter was greatly facilitated by the numerous workshops on the premises. The elements of drawing, surveying and geometry, botany, mineralogy, music, and athletic exercises formed a part of their amusements.

Hofwyl was an independent, selfgoverning community, regulated by a constitution and bylaws formed by the pupils themselves. It had its code of laws; its council of legislation; its representatives; its civil officers; its treasury. It had its annual elections, and each member had an equal vote; its labors and duties in which all took an equal share. It proposed, debated, and enacted its own laws independent even of Fellenberg himself, and never, writes one of the pupils after he had left it, "never perhaps were laws framed with a more single eye to the public good, nor more strictly obeyed by those who framed them."

The same writer considers this circumstance of forming the school into an independent juvenile republic, as the great lever that raised the moral and social character of the Hofwyl establishment to the height it ultimately attained. It gave birth, he says, to public spirit and to social virtues. It awakened in the young republican an interest in the public welfare, and a zeal for the public good, which might in vain be sought in older but not wiser communities. . . .

There is one point in which the committees believe that the gradual extension and ultimate universal adoption of this system of education will produce a benefit, the value of which no human calculation can ascertain. It is but too well known that the growing effects of intemperance—that assassinator of private peace and public virtue, are in this country terrific; and that this fearful pestilence, unless checked in its career by some

more efficient remedy than has yet been resorted to, threatens to annihilate, not only the domestic peace and prosperity of individuals, but also the moral order and political liberties of the nation. No people can long enjoy liberty who resign themselves to the slavery of this tyrant vice. Yet does it appear to the committees, that all efforts to root this moral poison from the constitution of society will prove futile until the trial shall be made upon our youth. When we behold the hundreds, perhaps thousands of youth, who, between the ages of 14 and 21 are daily and nightly seduced around or into the innumerable dens of vice, licensed and unlicensed, that throng our suburbs, we are constrained to believe that in many if not in most cases, the unconquerable habit that destroys the morals, ruins the constitution, sacrifices the character, and at last murders both soul and body of its victim, is first acquired during the thoughtless period of juvenile existence. This plan of education, however, by its almost entire occupation of the time of the pupils, either in labor, study, or recreations; by the superior facilities it affords for engrossing their entire attention, and by its capability of embracing the whole juvenile population, furnishes, we believe, the only rational hope of ultimately averting, the ruin which is threatened by this extensive vice.

The committee are aware that any plan of common and more particularly of equal education that may be offered to the public, is likely to meet with more than an ordinary share of opposition. It is to be expected that political demagogism, professional monopoly, and monied influence, will conspire as hitherto (with several exceptions more or less numerous) they ever have conspired against every thing that has promised to be an equal benefit to the whole population. Nevertheless, the appearance, that something will now be done for

the intellectual as well as every thing for the physical improvement of the state are certainly very promising. The public mind is awake and favorably excited, while the press also is somewhat active on this subject. Our present legislature and chief magistrate appear likewise earnestly desirous of producing a reform in the system of public education, and we believe they are waiting only for the public sentiment to decide on the principles and character of that reform.

When this decision shall be fully made, and openly and firmly supported by the public voice, we doubt not but our representatives will cheerfully give their legislative sanction to those measures of educational reform, which shall appear manifestly based upon the will of the people.

(2) The Argument against Public Schools.

Philadelphia *National Gazette*. Editorials published in July and August, 1830.

[July 10, p. 2, col. 2, 3] We remark the following toast in one of the lists which nearly fill the papers at this season.

"Education and general information—these must indeed constitute our only true National Bulwark. May the day soon come when in point of literary acquirements the poorest peasant shall stand on a level with his more wealthy neighbours."

It is our strong inclination and our obvious interest that literary acquirements should be universal; but we should be guilty of imposture, if we professed to believe in the possibility of that consummation. Literature cannot be acquired without leisure, and wealth gives leisure. Universal opulence, or even competency, is a chimera, as man and society are constituted. There will ever be distinctions of condition, of capacity, of knowledge and ignorance, in spite of all the fond

conceits which may be indulged, or the wild projects which may be tried, to the contrary. The "peasant" must labor during those hours of the day, which his wealthy neighbor can give to the abstract culture of his mind; otherwise, the earth would not yield enough for the subsistence of all: the mechanic cannot abandon the operations of his trade, for general studies; if he should, most of the conveniences of life and objects of exchange would be wanting; langour, decay, poverty, discontent would soon be visible among all classes. No government, no statesman, no philanthropist, can furnish what is incompatible with the very organization and being of civil society. Education, the most comprehensive, should be, and is, open to the whole community; but it must cost to every one, time and money; and those are means which every one cannot possess simultaneously. Doubtless, more of education and of information is attainable for all in this republic, than can be had any where else by the poor or the operatives, so called.

[July 12, p. 2, col. 1] It is an old and sound remark, that government cannot provide for the necessities of the People; that it is they who maintain the government, and not the latter the People. Education may be among their necessities; but it is one of that description which the state or national councils cannot supply, except partially and in a limited degree. They may endow public schools for the indigent, and colleges for the most comprehensive and costly scheme of instruction. To create or sustain seminaries for the tuition of all classes—to digest and regulate systems; to adjust and manage details, to render a multitude of schools effective, is beyond their province and power. Education in general must be the work of the intelligence, need, and enterprise of individuals and associations. At present, in nearly all the most populous parts of the United States,

it is attainable for nearly all the inhabitants; it is comparatively cheap, and if not the best possible, it is susceptible of improvement and likely to be advanced. Its progress and wider diffusion will depend, not upon government, but on the public spirit, information, liberality and training of the citizens themselves, who may appreciate duly the value of the object as a national good, and as a personal benefit for their children. Some of the writers about universal public instruction and discipline, seem to forget the constitution of modern society, and declaim as if our communities could receive institutions or habits like those of Sparta. The dream embraces grand Republican female academies, to make Roman matrons!

[July 16, p. 2, col. 1] The *Connecticut Courant*, of the 13th inst., gives the subjoined account of the Common Schools of that State.

"The prevailing mode of managing our common schools renders them comparatively useless. Exclusive reliance is placed upon the avails of the fund, and in a great majority of instances, no addition is made to the amount obtained from this source, by tax or otherwise, and consequently adequate means are not provided for employing competent instructors, and introducing the improvements which have been suggested by modern investigations. In most cases, the public provision which has been made for schools, instead of operating as an encouragement to liberality and effort for their improvement, is regarded as a sufficient excuse for doing nothing. Accordingly the public money is used while it lasts, and when this is exhausted the school is discontinued. A cheap instructor is employed for a few months, and the remainder of the year the school-house is closed."

This is but a faint illustration of what would happen

if the new project of Universal Education, by means of the Government, was at all practicable and should be attempted. The higher colleges, military and naval schools, and schools for the indigent, may be endowed by government and administered by persons of its choice; but education generally, to be effective, must be left to the enterprise and competition of individuals, to the sagacity and liberality of parents, and to the efforts of enlightened associations. In this country, nothing could prevent it from becoming a political job, if a government concern.

[August 19, p. 2, col. 1, 2] We can readily pardon the editor of the *United States Gazette* for not perceiving that the scheme of Universal Equal Education at the expense of the State, is virtually "Agrarianism." It would be a compulsory application of the means of the richer, for the direct use of the poorer classes; and so far an arbitrary division of property among them. The declared object is, to procure the opportunity of instruction for the child or children of every citizen; to elevate the standard of the education of the working classes, or equalize the standard for all classes; which would, doubtless, be to lower or narrow that which the rich may now compass. But the most sensible and reflecting possessors of property sufficient to enable them to educate their children in the most liberal and efficacious way, and upon the broadest scale, would prefer to share their means for any other purpose, or in any other mode, than such as would injuriously affect or circumscribe the proficiency of their offspring. A public meeting of "the Mechanics and other Working Men of the City and County of New York," was held in the city, on the 17th inst., and among the principles for which they have "resolved" to contend, we find the following:

“In Education—The adoption of a general system of instruction, at the expense of the State, which shall afford to children, however rich or poor, equal means to obtain useful learning. To effect this, it is believed that a system of direct taxation will not be necessary, as the surplus revenue of the State and United States Governments will, in a very few years, afford ample means—but even if it were necessary to resort to direct taxation to accomplish this all-important object, and the amount paid by the wealthy should be far greater than that paid by our less eligibly situated fellow-citizens, an equivalent to them would be found in the increased ability and usefulness of the educated citizen to serve and to promote the best interests of the State; in the increased permanency of our institutions—and in the superior protection of liberty, person and property.”

Thus, a direct tax for “the equal means of obtaining useful learning” is not deemed improbable, and it is admitted that the amount which would be paid by the wealthy would be “far greater” than that paid by their “less eligibly situated fellow citizens.” Here, we contend, would be the action, if not the name, of the Agrarian system. Authority—that is, the State—is to force the more eligibly situated citizens to contribute a part (which might be very considerable) of their means, for the accommodation of the rest; and this is equivalent to the idea of an actual, compulsory partition of their substance. The more thriving members of the “mechanical and other working classes” would themselves feel the evil of the direct taxation; they would find that they had toiled for the benefit of other families than their own. One of the chief excitements to industry, among those classes, is the hope of earning the means of educating their children respectably or liberally: that incentive would be removed, and the scheme of State and equal

education be thus a premium for comparative idleness, to be taken out of the pockets of the laborious and conscientious. . . .

We have no confidence in any compulsory equalizations; it has been well observed that they pull down what is above, but never much raise what is below, and often "depress high and low together beneath the level of what was originally the lowest." By no possibility could a perfect equality be procured. A scheme of universal equal education, attempted in reality, would be an unexampled bed of Procrustes, for the understandings of our youth, and in fact, could not be used with any degree of equality of profit, unless the dispositions and circumstances of parents and children were nearly the same; to accomplish which phenomenon, in a nation of many millions, engaged in a great variety of pursuits, would be beyond human power. . . .

[August 23, p. 2. col. 1] We perceive that the editor of the *United States Gazette* has not studied the Boston Free School system. There is no parity or affinity between that and the new scheme of Universal Equal Education. Only a portion of the Massachusetts youth are educated in the Free Schools. Throughout New England, and particularly in Connecticut, well-grounded complaint is made of the insufficiency and mismanagement of the system. We do know that it has been found extremely difficult to induce the poorer classes of Philadelphia to avail themselves, for their children, of our Common Schools; and that they neglect the benefit in a degree which would be deemed almost incredible. It is not that they are averse to the charity education, as such; they prefer, or are obliged, to use their offspring at home, or consign them to manufactories.

In New York, the same reluctance or refusal is experienced. There is room in the schools there, for

thousands more of pupils than are given. The real state of the case may be known by reference to the New York official reports. Good private teachers would abound in Philadelphia, if they could obtain scholars. We are acquainted with men of excellent capacity, who have failed wholly or partially, in the attempt to form establishments, though asking for their instruction, a price within the means of the great majority of our citizens. The due encouragement of private enterprise would answer every salutary purpose. . . .

[August 25, p. 2, col. 1, 2] The editor of the New York *Morning Herald* observes—

“We cannot believe that the editor of the *National Gazette* intended to imply by his remarks (on Universal Education) that the labouring classes ought to be debarred the liberty of acquiring an education, by which they would be placed on a level with the wealthy.”

Certainly not. Some years ago, we strenuously resisted a project for the establishment of a special school in this city for the Mechanics, from which instruction in the dead languages was to be excluded; and our chief motive was to prevent the Mechanics from being thus deprived of the kind of education necessary to the learned professions, to which it is their interest and right, and the interest of the country, that access should be kept open for their children. They possess “the liberty of acquiring an education placing them on a level with the wealthy,” we mean such of the mechanics as are able to pay the moderate charges of the classical schools—the University of Pennsylvania for instance. We are sorry that more of those who can afford it do not avail themselves of the opportunity. . . .

The trades and handicraft generally must be continued; a full apprenticeship must be served; and with these necessities of society, a full, liberal education for

the artisan and laboring youth would be incompatible. The thriving master-mechanics might, as they can now do, place their own children on a level with the wealthy, in point of education; but they must ever employ boys and men comparatively uneducated, or their business would be at an end. Universal Equal Education is impossible, if the trades, manufactories and manual labor are to be successfully prosecuted, unless the standard of education be greatly lowered and narrowed. . . .

(d) ADDRESS OF THE CITY AND COUNTY CONVENTION TO THE WORKING MEN OF THE STATE

Mechanics' Free Press, July 10, 1830, p. 1, col. 6; p. 2, col. 2.

FELLOW-CITIZENS: In offering to your consideration a subject of such importance, we shall state the ground which has led us to a separation from the two great political parties which have heretofore misruled and misrepresented the people, and the reasons for dissenting from existing laws, which we consider unreasonable and unjust, operating like an incubus upon the equitable energies of those who constitute the true wealth and strength of our country, thereby nullifying in practice the glorious principle and vivifying declaration that "all men are born equal." Too long have the operatives of this country, as in all others, been left without a suitable representation in the local, state and national councils to guard their interests and crush a power in its origin that ultimately deadens and paralyses their efforts to sustain their rank and privileges as freemen; a power which while it holds them amenable, yet, through the influence of the powers that be, passes by the malversations of the great, the rich, and the powerful.

In assuming a title, our object is not to draw another useless line of distinction between our fellow-citizens for mere electioneering purposes—it is that all thinking

as we do may rally under one banner, and by a unity in action produce the desired end.

The main pillar of our system is general education; for it is an axiom no longer controverted, that the stability of a republic depends mainly upon the intelligence of its citizens—that in proportion as they become wise they become virtuous and happy—that the period for forming a good and useful citizen is in youth, ere ignorance and crime have deluded the mind by a lengthened dominion over it, and therefore that an early and suitable education for each child is of primary importance in maintaining the public weal.

It is now forty years since the adoption of the constitution of Pennsylvania, and although that instrument strongly recommends that provision be made for the education of our youth at the public expense, yet during that long period, has the salutary and patriotic obligation been disregarded by our legislative authority, and thousands are now suffering the consequences of this disregard to the public welfare on the part of our rulers.

It is true, that some attempts have been made to remedy the omission in two or three districts of the state, but they have proved ineffectual. The very spirit in which these provisions have been made not only defeats the object intended, but tends also to draw still broader the line of distinction between the rich and the poor. All who receive the limited knowledge imparted by the present system of public education are looked upon as paupers, drawing from a fount which they have in no wise contributed towards creating. The spirit of independence and of feeling in which all participate, cause the honest and industrious poor to reject a proffered bounty that connects with its reception a seeming disgrace. This honest pride in relation to charity schools,

however injurious its effects may be on the poor man's offspring, is nevertheless commendable, inasmuch as it is in accordance with the spirit of our free institutions, with our elevated national character—and such a narrow policy is less than they have a right to demand at the hands of our representatives.

It is in vain for the opponents of equal education to assert that the poor, if left to themselves, will use their exertions to educate their children, and that the expenses saved them by its being accomplished by public means, will be expended by the parent on less important subjects; for it is a lamentable fact, that persons destitute of education are ignorant of the loss they sustain, and hence, fail to avert the evil from their offspring. The ignorance of the parent generally extends to his children's children, while the blessings of a liberal education are handed down from father to son as a legacy which poverty cannot impoverish.

We confidently anticipate the cordial co-operation of our brethren throughout the state in favour of this great object, so essential to our happiness as freemen. All must be aware of the necessity of the prompt interference of the people in behalf of those cardinal principles of republican liberty which were declared in '76, and which can only be sustained by the adoption of an ample system of public instruction, calculated to impart equality as well as mental culture—the establishment of institutions where the children of the poor and the rich may meet at that period of life, when the pomp and circumstance of wealth have not engendered pride; when the only distinction known, will be the celebrity each may acquire by their acts of good fellowship; when the best opportunity is afforded for forming associations that will endure through life, and where the obloquy attending the present system will not attach. The objection

that the children of the wealthy will not be sent to these schools, is one of minor importance. Our main object is to secure the benefits of education for those who would otherwise be destitute, and to place them mentally on a level with the most favored in the world's gifts. As poverty is not a crime, neither is wealth a virtue. Why then so much anxiety to be associated with a particular portion of our citizens merely on account of their wealth? They form but a small portion of the entire population of our country, and as its safety must depend upon the majority, 'tis there our duty and our exertions should be directed.

It has been remarked, and with much plausibility, that if common schools were established, and provided with suitable instructors in the various departments of a thorough education, the numbers attending "colleges" would be much diminished. This position we admit and cheerfully assent to. Our object is not to raise the hue and cry against colleges—it is not to drag down and chain the intellect of others to the common extent of learning by endeavoring to enlist the public voice against them, but it is to make each avenue of learning the certain pathway to the entire field of science.

Let us unite then, fellow citizens, on a measure fraught with such momentous consequences—a measure involving the happiness or misery of posterity. We are all equally interested in preventing crime by contributing to the means of knowledge and virtue. Consider the responsibility which rests upon us as parents and citizens of a free state. We should constantly bear in mind that the prosperity and happiness of our beloved country essentially depend on the speedy adoption of an equal and republican system of mental instruction. Let it no longer be said that the people of Pennsylvania, with the most unbounded resources, should be the last to embark

in the glorious work of providing for the intellectual emancipation of her offspring.

It may perhaps be owing to the non-existence of this desirable object, that we have to complain of other evils, affecting the interests of the Working Man in a pecuniary point, in respectability, and not unfrequently his personal liberty.

We shall particularly call your attention to the practice of granting special favours in charters and monopolies, by which the profits arising from any branch of trade, are taken from the community and given to favorites. This practice originated in monarchies whose features were in the extreme despotic. The British practised it previous to the settlement of this country, and most, if not all, of our states were settled in consequence of charters or grants to particular men. Unfortunately for our country, these insidious features of despotism were soon engrafted on our institutions, and from use have become a constituent portion of our government. The natural resistance to these subtle communities, is founded in the dislike to distinctions, totally opposed to republican opinions, of equality, and to the blasting effects on the productive portion of the community. There can be no doubt that all chartered monopolies are infringements on the rights of the citizen, however we may be disposed to accede to their usefulness, when confined to necessary objects unattainable by individual enterprise.

The moment they pass these bounds, and commence to accumulate wealth and power in the hands of a few, it is at the expense of those who have not the inclination or means to participate, and falls eventually upon those who are the only producers of the necessities, luxuries, and comforts of life.

The objections against monopolies apply with tenfold

force to banks. Without discussing the question of how far the emission of paper money is an infraction of the United States Constitution, it is an undeniable fact, that these emissions are of great injury to the people, by its unequal, fluctuating and easily imitated currency. We cannot but weep over that policy of our legislature, which transplanted from a foreign soil an evil so great, and so opposite to the spirit of liberty. The declination—the ruin of republican governments may follow the existence of two classes, the immensely rich and the miserably poor. The existence of banks is an evil which we cannot expect soon to overcome; but as they do exist, the stockholders should at least be made answerable for all debts, and the payment of all forged notes; for as they are the only gainers, others should not be the only losers.

An appendage, if not a component part of chartered monopolies, will be found in the lottery system—a system calculated to endow the rich with the hard earnings of the poor—to enable the hand of oppression to grasp from the palm of penury its poor pittance, and to make the wealthy more powerful, while it enslaves the needy. To the practice of speculation, which has been instrumental in producing, and the policy that has continued, so great an evil, we particularly object. There are at present not less than 200 lottery offices in Philadelphia, and as many if not more persons engaged in hawking tickets. Against the former we say naught. Theirs are voluntary purchasers, whilst the itinerant vender assails the poor man at his labour, enters the abode of the needy, and by holding out false promises of wealth, induces him to hazard his little all on the demoralizing system, which costs the City of Philadelphia alone \$500,000 per annum.

To the militia system we call your particular attention. We would ask if a plan could be produced less

likely to effect its object, than that which now degrades the state? What benefits result from it? Are the citizens who are not attached to a volunteer corps at all advanced in a knowledge of the military science? Could the government, in the event of an invasion, depend upon the discipline it enforces? Is it not a heavy tax upon the state, without the shadow of a benefit? Does not a compliance with its provisions cause annually great inconvenience, and promote scenes of debauchery, collecting the depraved and the vicious, and contributing largely to a continuance of their degradation? Has not every parade a tendency to bring the system more into disrepute, and does it not receive the censure of every intelligent man in the community? If the coercive militia trainings were abandoned entirely, is there any probability that the numbers of our volunteer soldiers would be diminished? And is it not evident that the discipline, and effective power of a soldier proceeds solely from a becoming spirit, which cannot exist when he is coerced into the ranks? The answers to these queries exist in the breast of every observer of our "spring trainings," and although it is universally admitted to be an evil of great magnitude, suitable efforts have not been made for its removal: it still exists, a monument of the gross ignorance, or wilful neglect of those sent to represent our interests.

In its place we would recommend a total abandonment of the disgraceful militia musters, calculated to cast a blot on our country's military escutcheon, and that legislative encouragement be given to "our chief reliance in the moment of danger," our volunteers.

Past experience has convinced us of the impolicy of requiring heavy pecuniary securities, for the fulfillment of trusts reposed in public officers. We look upon the system, as having a direct tendency towards building up

a monied aristocracy; as the man of limited means, no matter how eminent his talents or unimpeached his integrity, is debarred the opportunity of attaining any lucrative office, for the want of sufficient surities, or else he must become the pliant tool of those who will reap all the benefits of his appointment. By reducing the pecuniary securities, and making a public defalcation a penal offence, the poor as well as the wealthy would be eligible to offices of profit and of honour.

There is one more subject to which we wish to call your attention, before we close this address. It is the subject of imprisonment for debt; it is one in which all who have a regard for the rights of their fellow men will unite, and all whose bosoms glow with philanthropy, will rejoice to see its abolition. How long fellow citizens, shall the fair page of our history be blemished by this foul blot? How long shall it be the policy of our government, to add oppression and insult to the wounded feeling of the unfortunate man? The existing laws on this subject are very defective. The creditor is not rightly protected against the swindler, and the poor man is burthened with the expense to procure bail, &c., to get through. We say the creditor is not protected, because he is at all times made to prove that the applicant has property. We would have that every man, when he contracts a debt, should make it appear that he is solvent, (if the creditor should require it) and that such declaration should be used as evidence against him, and that the court should not allow the applicant, in account for loss actually sustained, any extravagant living, horse and gig hire, &c., only allowing him to account for reasonable wearing apparel and other reasonable domestic expenses and actual losses. If such were the case, there would be but a limited number of applicants for the benefit of the insolvent laws. The industrious

trader and working man would not be so often robbed of their substance, to keep in idleness the host of swindlers and knaves that now prey upon their very vitals.

In closing this address, it will be necessary to propose some general course, whereby the evils of which we complain may be remedied, and to secure the adoption of measures calculated to promote the interest and enhance the happiness of each and every class in society. This has one remedy: select honest, fearless, and capable agents—vote for no proud patrician who cannot subscribe to the precepts and principles of the Working Men—consider all against, whose pride prevents him from acknowledging himself for us, and, by a manly, prudent, and united action, oppose the selection of improper men to places of power and trust, by the election of those more honest and capable possessing principles of pure republicanism, and thereby eventually secure the passage of just and equitable laws—let difficulties and disappointments but add fresh determination to our zeal, endeavouring to make each contest a victory. Let us bear in mind, that in obtaining an equal system of education, we will rid ourselves of every existing evil—let us dispel the objections against sending children to public schools—the thought that it is disreputable, should not, for a moment, be permitted to dwell within our bosoms; it is the offspring of a narrow-minded prejudice, originating in pride and cherished by feelings incompatible with the existence of perfect equality. The noblest minded of our citizens, accept, without hesitation, any office in the gift of the public or its authorities, the emoluments of which are paid to them out of taxes levied on the citizens generally. The most wealthy deem it not derogatory to have their children educated at the public expense, at our National School at West Point, and none refuse a similar benefit from the Navy;

and wherein, we would ask, are the principles we advocate, less worthy than those practised by the "dignitaries" and "patricians" of our country?

Education is alone the banner on which our civil and religious freedom can be inscribed, never to be defaced; and whilst borne in triumph by the support of each citizen, every succeeding anniversary of our political independence will proclaim an "All's Well."

JOHN ASTON, JUNIOR; JOHN THOMPSON; JOHN S. WARNER; WILLIAM J. CRANS; WILLIAM J. YOUNG; JOSEPH A. M'CLINTOCK; RICHARD P. RISDON

Committee.

3. CO-OPERATION

(a) THE PLAN OF THE CINCINNATI LABOUR FOR LABOUR STORE

Mechanics' Free Press, Aug. 9, 1828, p. 1, col. 1, 2.

EXPLANATION OF THE DESIGN AND ARRANGEMENTS of the Co-operative Magazine, which has recently been commenced in Cincinnati.

Whoever can for a moment, so far abstract his thoughts from his pecuniary concerns, as to look around him, and observe the evils, which the established laws and customs, with respect to the administration of property, are daily producing in what is called Civilized Society, must, if he is possessed of the least degree of sensibility, feel a strong desire, to remove these evils.

That the inevitable tendency of these Laws and Customs, is to produce Ignorance, Want, and Wretchedness, to the majority of mankind, to the labouring and useful members of Society, we have only to refer to their condition, in those countries where the present arrangements have been longest in operation, and where a full and satisfactory trial of them has been made.

In these countries, abounding with everything that is desirable, we see the labouring and useful members of Society, who have produced every thing, starving in the streets for want; while some are rendered equally miserable from the anxieties of speculation and competition, and others for want of an object worthy of pursuit, are destroying their health, and shortening their lives by inactivity and apathy, or by luxuriously revelling upon the labour of the depressed.

Insincerity among friends, Lawsuits between rela-

tions, Hypocrisy in religion—deception in trade—dishonesty, speculation and enmity between man and man, are only a few of the results of these laws and customs.

Nor should we confine our observations to the old world only. Already have we in this country, made alarming progress in the road to national ruin; and unless some effort be made to prevent the accumulation of the wealth of the country, in the hands of a few, we instead of setting to the world an example of republican simplicity, of Peace and Liberty, shall soon add one more to the catalogue of nations, whom aristocracy has blasted, and whom inequality of wealth, has precipitated from a comparatively prosperous situation to the lowest grade of degradation and misery.

Every reflecting mind must perceive the propriety of searching for the means by which these evils may be avoided, and of making every practicable effort (however feeble) to put them in operation.

With these views an experiment has been commenced in this place; which although upon a very small scale, will test the principles upon which it is based. And it will be a very easy and natural step, to make more complete and extensive arrangements whenever it may be desirable.

As this experiment now begins to excite much inquiry; and as it is immediately connected with the greatest interests of all parties, it appears necessary and proper to bring the subject forward in such a form and manner that all may have an opportunity to consider, and to understand it.

It is already known that the method of dealing at this place is different from that in common practice. But it is a few of our friends only, who at present understand in what this difference consists.

It is for the information of inquiries, and for the

benefit of those who are desirous of making similar arrangements, that the following statements are made, and in doing this, we shall carefully avoid all comments and matters of opinion, they may in future occupy their proper time and place—at present we wish to make a simple statement of facts, and leave the reader to draw his own conclusions.

By the new arrangements, all Labour is valued by the Time employed in it.

Much might be said to show that, as Time is above all things most valuable, that Time is the real and natural standard of value. But we will not now undertake to prove, that, which (upon reflection) no one will undertake to deny. We will rather proceed to give the arrangements which have been made to carry this principle into effect.

PRESENT ARRANGEMENT OF THE MAGAZINE. Here upon this single and simple principle, all exchanges of articles and personal services are made, so that he who employs five or ten hours of his time, in the service of another, receives five or ten hours labour of the other in return. The estimates of the time cost, of articles having been obtained from those whose business it is to produce them, are always exposed to view, so that it may be readily ascertained, at what rate any article will be given and received. He who deposits an article, which by our estimate costs ten hours labour, receives any other articles, which, together with the labour of the keeper in receiving and delivering them, costs ten hours, or, if the person making the deposit does not wish at that time, to draw out any article, he receives a Labour Note for the amount; with this note he will draw out articles, or obtain the labour of the keeper, whenever he may wish to do so.

In cases where the labour does not admit of being de-

posited, the person who receives it, gives a labour note on the Magazine, by which the bearer can draw out any articles which the Magazine may contain, as persons of all professions will require those things which do admit of being deposited. At present many articles are bought with money—these are delivered out for the same amount of money which the keeper paid for them, and he is rewarded for his labour with an equal amount of the labour of him who receives them, which is deducted from the note before mentioned.

There are some articles, one part of which at present is procured with money, and the other has been deposited upon the new principle. That part for which money was paid, is paid for in money, and the other part is paid for in an equal amount of labour. We do not exchange labour for money, or money for labour, excepting in particular cases of necessity.

The loss on any article, after having been ascertained, is added to, and becomes one part of its price. An account of all the labour and money expenses is kept, and when any one receives an article, he pays as much labour and money over and above the cost, as will be likely to pay these expenses; the amount being liable to vary according to local and other circumstances, is fixed periodically by the keeper. An open record is kept upon which is noted in a simple and expeditious manner, each article that is delivered: and this is done by such a method that at a meeting of those who are in the habit of dealing here, it can be readily ascertained how much labour and money have been received for the purpose of discharging these expenses: and if when compared with the account of expenses it appears that too much has been received, the overplus will be distributed equally unless any individuals choose to keep an account of the precise proportions of their dealing, in which case

they will receive accordingly. If too little has been paid, all will see the propriety and the necessity of supplying the deficiency, and therefore no obligation to that effect is required. The expenses are paid in this manner, in order to secure the Magazine against the chances of loss, and to enable strangers to receive the benefits of the establishment, without being under the necessity of returning at a future time for the purpose of discharging these little items of expense.

The keeper exhibits the bills of all his purchasers to public view so that the cost of every article may be known to all. There is a list upon which each individual who is in the practice of dealing here, can make known his wants, and the keeper of the Magazine reports each day the articles or labour that can be received, and those who wish for the employment, refer first to the report of their wants to know whether their articles or services are required—as none can be received which are not wanted.

When the keeper has occasion for money, he reports upon the list of wants the rate at which he is willing to receive it in exchange for his labour. There is a place for advertisements, so that communications can be made to all interested. When any one wishes to deal in the common way, and feels no interests in the new arrangements, the keeper will deal in that way, provided the profits will amount to that which he requires in money as the reward of his labour for that day.

These are all the important arrangements which have so far appeared necessary. There are no contracts or agreements between any parties but these, or any other regulations or customs which may from time to time be adopted at this place, will always be subject to alteration, or to be abolished whenever increasing knowledge shall exhibit the propriety of change.

N.B. Those who may be desirous of establishing Magazines will find their labour very much abridged by taking copies of our Labour estimates of Articles.

(b) CONSTITUTION OF THE PHILADELPHIA LABOUR
FOR LABOUR ASSOCIATION

Mechanics' Free Press, May 24, 1828, p. 2, col. 2, 3.

Fully persuaded that nothing short of an entire change in the present regulations of trade and commerce will ever be permanently beneficial to the productive part of the community,

We agree to form a society for the purpose of introducing an equitable valuation of labour, to be located in the city or county of Philadelphia, under the following Constitution.

ARTICLE 1st. The title of the society shall be the producer's exchange of labour for labour association.

ARTICLE 2d. The members shall consist of such persons of both sexes, over the age of twelve years, as shall sign this constitution.

ARTICLE 3d. The association will, as soon as twenty-five persons have become parties hereto, rent or purchase a suitable tenement to be occupied as a place of exchange; which shall be denominated the producers exchange of labour for labour store.

ARTICLE 4th. The association shall choose by ballot, at the expiration of every three months, a President, Secretary, Committee of Trade and Commerce, and Committee of Exchange.

DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Section 1st. The president will preside at all meetings of the association, draw all orders on the store for the payment of rent of store, committee of trade and commerce, and committee of exchange.

Section 2d. The secretary will keep a record of the minutes of the meeting of the association, attest all or-

ders drawn by the president, and record the same in a book kept especially for the purpose.

Section 3d. The committee of trade and commerce will inspect the affairs of the store, and report at the expiration of every month, the number and description of articles that remain on hand over & above the quantity which they deem requisite for the subsequent month's supply; and upon receiving the direction of the association therefor, will immediately exchange with general society or otherwise, such surplus for any other articles that the association may require; and at the expiration of every three months, they will take an account of the stock remaining on hand, audit the accounts of the committee of exchange, ascertain the amount of the incidental expenses of the store, and report accordingly.

Section 4th. The committee of exchange will receive and deliver all commodities deposited by the members, or procured by the committee of trade and commerce, keep accurate accounts thereof, in a book or books, to be provided by the association—and open a debit and credit with each member in a pass book to be procured by him and retained in his possession; they will also report daily the description of articles that the association may stand in need of.

ARTICLE 5th. The members shall be at liberty to make deposits in the store, of such articles as are enumerated in the report of wants, at such times as the association may agree upon.

ARTICLE 6th. All articles that are entirely the produce of the labour of members of the association, or, for no part of which money has been paid, shall be valued by the number of hours, or parts of an hour, required for the production, and where different persons of the same profession, disagree in their estimates, the

average of the whole shall be the price. A medium adult workman shall be taken as a criterion, but if females or children, perform the work, it does not in our opinion diminish its value.

ARTICLE 7th. All articles that are manufactured out of materials which cost money, shall be received at the store at the prime money cost of such materials, and the number of hours, or parts of an hour, required for their manufacture.

ARTICLE 8th. The merchandize procured by the committee of trade and commerce, shall be delivered by the committee of exchange to the members at the money cost and labour value of the goods exchanged for it. The association agree and bind themselves never to attempt a conversion of money into labour, or vice versa, as we are satisfied that no such conversion can take place, without the most palpable and flagrant injustice.

ARTICLE 9th. Any member depositing any article in the store, for the whole of which he paid money, will be required to present the bill of sale thereof to the committee of exchange, who will take a copy thereof, which, together with a list of the money cost, and labour value, of all articles received at the store, shall at all times be open to the inspection of all the members.

ARTICLE 10th. There shall be kept in the store a report book, to which the members shall have free access, where those who have articles to dispose of, and those who want employment, or are desirous to procure any commodities not usually kept in the store, could severally make known their wants, and ascertain whether their articles or services were required, and where the committee of exchange will make known the wants of the store.

ARTICLE 11th. The association shall upon the report of the committee of trade and commerce, authorize and

direct them to exchange the surplus contained in such report, for such other articles as the association may agree.

ARTICLE 12th. Members shall be entitled to draw out of the store, either personally or by their order, to the amount of their deposits, in any commodities it may contain, but no one shall be permitted to draw therefrom, a greater amount of either money or labour, than he or she deposits, upon any account, nor by the order of any of the officers of the association, nor otherwise than by the express consent therefor in writing, of all the members first had and obtained.

ARTICLE 13th. The committee of trade and commerce, and committee of exchange, will be at liberty to present once a month, at one of the regular meetings of the association, an account of the numbers of hours they have been employed in the discharge of their respective duties, which account shall be paid in articles the labour value of which has been ascertained.

ARTICLE 14th. The members agree to defray equally among them, the rent and incidental expenses of the store, and the compensation of the committee of trade and commerce and of exchange.

ARTICLE 15th. The association will not be answerable for the private individual debts of any of the members, contracted either previous to, or during membership.

ARTICLE 16th. The association will not pay any debts contracted in its name, or on its account, by any of its officers or members.

ARTICLE 17th. The association shall have power to enact by a majority of the members present, at any of the regular meetings; such bye-laws as may from time to time be found necessary: Provided, that such bye-

laws shall be in strict accordance with the constitution; and further provided that they shall be proposed for the consideration of the association at the regular meeting next preceding their enactment.

ARTICLE 18th. The association may at any time heretofore be dissolved, by the unanimous vote by ballot, of all the members: Provided, that a resolution for that purpose, be presented to the association at one of its regular meetings, at least three months previous to a final decision being taken on it, and persons may discontinue their membership, by declaring, either verbally or in writing, their wish to do so, at one of the regular meetings of the association.

ARTICLE 19th. The association may at any time hereafter, alter or amend, this constitution, by the concurrence of a majority of two-thirds of all the members: Provided, that notice of such alteration, or amendment, shall be given at the regular meeting next preceding its adoption, except the sixth, seventh, eighth, twelfth, eighteenth and nineteenth articles, which shall never be altered or amended, otherwise than by the express consent in writing therefor of all the members.

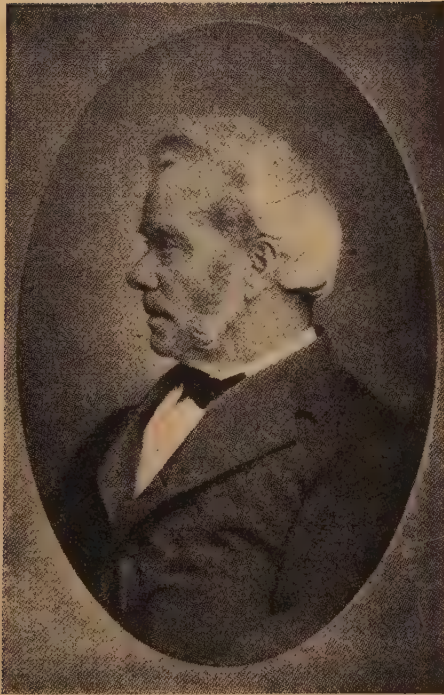
(c) A LETTER FROM JOSIAH WARREN

Mechanics' Free Press, May 10, 1828, p. 2, col. 2.

Cincinnati, April 20, 1828.

Dear S—The perusal of your letter which I received about three weeks since, gave me great satisfaction. It affords me pleasure to find that you still feel such interest in the subject to which I am devoted. You inquire what progress has been made since you left here; to this I could reply more than the limits of a letter will permit, but I will endeavour to enable you to form some idea. I think you left before the cold weather commenced, and therefore have not witnessed the most im-

portant of our operations. As soon as the season became cool, there were great demands for cloths of various kinds, which I found no difficulty in procuring. I bought at the public sales on a credit of 60 and 90 days, and very often sold the goods in 6 days, and some in less time. The place now became crowded, although you know that it stands remote from the bustle of business; so much was this the case that I became so exhausted with buying and selling goods, and in talking and explaining that I was obliged to shut up the magazine, half of each day in order to rest from the fatigue and confusion occasioned by the business of the other half. But this produced so much disappointment to the country people & others, that I was induced to open again during the day-time. John Ramsdale, who was with us at Harmony, and who was much opposed to the system at the commencement, has turned his store into a place of the kind, and now fully adopts it. He is the only one who has actually commenced, but many have had it in contemplation. One very important fact, that Messrs. Folger, Nye, Saunders, Pickering, Burgen, Rider, and all those who were so much delighted at first, have not changed their views in the least, except by an increase of zeal in its favour; and many more who knew nothing of it nor had any correct views of the nature of justice between man and man, when you was here have become really enlightened on the all-important subject, and in their intercourse with others are now spreading the honest principle far and wide. The magazine has been enlarged to about double its former dimensions; the work was performed by seven Carpenters, all upon the time system, and by putting my labour against theirs, they have gained at the rates of from 1 to 50 dollars per hour. This would not be believed by any



JOSIAH WARREN

First American anarchist and descendant of Joseph
Warren, killed at Bunker Hill

*(From a photograph by Frank Rowell. Reproduced
by permission from Bailie's Josiah Warren, the First
American Anarchist)*

one who had not realized it by some experience, but you have seen something of its results.

I have had Rice at $1\frac{1}{4}$ cents per pound, Codfish at $2\frac{1}{2}$ cents, while the standing prices are $6\frac{1}{2}$ and 8 cents for the former, and 8 for the latter. Medicines as usual.²³ Cloths at about 33 per cent. below the current prices; remarks will be rendered unnecessary by your own reflections upon these facts.

We have commenced shoemaking, and several have perceived the practicability of learning a business which they never thought of before. Mr. Ashworth²⁴ made a pair of shoes at the first attempt, which none but a critic could perceive were not the production of an experienced workman; and many others have acquired a knowledge of this trade with equal facility. When we require instruction in any part with which we are not acquainted, we obtain it from some of our friends and pay them hour for hour in labour notes on the Magazine. I look upon these movements with great interest, for they are of immense importance to those who are now suffering by mystery and speculation.

I can say no more now without incurring double postage, therefore for the present—farewell. Your friend,

JOSIAH WARREN.

MR. ROBERT SMITH, Philadelphia.

²³ That is the wholesale prices which varies from one to three hundred per cent. discount on standard retail prices.

²⁴ Mr. A. is a gentleman of between 40 and 50 years of age, who had never before worked at any mechanical avocation.—R.S.

III

THE WORKING
MEN'S PARTY OF NEW YORK

INTRODUCTION

In New York the working men's political movement began in 1829. In 1828, however, there had occurred a vigorous "anti-auction" campaign, in which the appeal was made primarily to mechanics, and this issue was later incorporated in the working men's political platform. The movement in New York was much more complicated than in Philadelphia, more radical in its demands, more distinct in its cleavage of classes and attended with greater immediate success. It extended rapidly, moreover, to other sections and during 1830 was widespread throughout the state of New York.

As in Philadelphia, the working men's party had its origin in a ten-hour movement. In this case, however, the demand was not for shortening the hours of labor, but for retaining the ten-hour day already secured, and was not originally confined to a particular trade but was general among the mechanics. For a time the movement was dominated by Thomas Skidmore, the author of a book published late in 1829 and entitled *The Rights of Man to Property: being a Proposition to make it Equal among the Adults of the Present Generation: and to Provide for its Equal Transmission to Every Individual of Each Succeeding Generation, on arriving at the Age of Maturity*. The ideas promulgated in this book came to be widely known under the name, agrarianism, and were violently attacked by the press of the day. These ideas, however, injected into a preamble and resolutions presented at a public meeting of working men on October 19, 1829, and partially

hidden in a mass of fervid democratic doctrine, were hastily approved, a motion to have the resolutions discussed one by one being overruled by Skidmore, and went forth as the sentiments of the mechanics of New York. At the same time, the fact that Robert Dale Owen happened to be one of the secretaries of the meeting of October 19, led to the inference that his friends were in control of the new party, and the ticket came to be universally known, after the name of Owen's fellow-editor of the *Free Enquirer*, as the Fanny Wright Ticket. Both Owen and Frances Wright, however, repudiated Skidmore's doctrines.

Soon after the election, the working men began to reconsider their hastily adopted program; and a conference committee of the several wards was appointed which presented on December 29, 1829, an address, resolutions and plan of organization which repudiated the agrarian doctrines. Skidmore was present at this meeting and attempted to speak but was shouted down by the multitude. He later set up his own party and platform under the name of "the original working men", started a paper called the *Friend of Equal Rights*, and was active in both the spring and fall campaigns of 1830. In the fall election, when the party had candidates for all the state offices except governor, Skidmore himself received 116 votes for Congress.²⁵

Meanwhile the majority party elected a general executive committee of five members from each of the fourteen wards of the city. This committee of seventy nominated sub-committees, which in the course of three months brought in reports on imprisonment for debt, auctions, taxation of bank stock, and city markets, and these were adopted as memorials to the legislature. The report of the education committee, however, which

²⁵ *Farmers', Mechanics' and Workingmen's Advocate*, Nov. 13, 1830.

was generally recognized as the most important of the sub-committees, was delayed by disagreements. One of the seven members of the committee was in favor of a report which advocated the state guardianship system of education, the idea of which was originally advanced in this country by Robert Dale Owen, who derived it in part from his recollection of his own boyhood at the Fellenberg school at Hofwyl, Switzerland, the prototype of the George Junior Republic, and in part from the communistic teachings of his father, Robert Owen. Upon this rock the sub-committee and later the executive committee itself split. The majority of the sub-committee sent in a report denouncing the state guardianship plan and assailing somewhat acrimoniously the minority member. Its report was adopted, it was alleged, by a trick in which twenty-five members of the executive committee forced a snap vote at a meeting when but forty-five were present. Their action, however, appears to have been sustained by the majority, for the Address which they later issued explaining the matter was signed by forty-three members of the executive committee, including two elected meanwhile in place of two who belonged to the minority.

The minority, however, promptly held meetings in the various wards and filled up its vacancies. Thus there came to be three working men's parties in the city of New York; the Agrarian Party, voiced by the *Friend of Equal Rights*; the State Guardianship Party, voiced by the *Daily Sentinel* and the *Working Man's Advocate*; and a third party, variously designated as the North American Hotel Party, the Anti-education Party, the Twenty-five, etc., voiced by the *Evening Journal*. This third party appears to have been the largest numerically, for in the fall campaign its candidates for assembly received from 5,937 to 7,836 votes, while those

of the State Guardianship Party received only from 2,128 to 2,329 votes.²⁶ It was the party, moreover, with which most of the working men outside of the city of New York were in sympathy, and its delegates were accepted, in opposition to those sent by the state guardianship faction, by the state convention of working men held at Salina.

At this convention of "farmers, mechanics and workingmen" there were present seventy-eight delegates from thirteen counties. Tickets had been nominated in a considerable number of localities and had been partially or entirely successful in Troy, Albany, Syracuse, Salina, and other places. These tickets, however, appear to have been nominated and supported in opposition to the Albany Regency, rather than in support of a clear-cut working class program. The candidate for governor nominated by the Salina convention, moreover, was a prominent Democrat, who after several weeks' delay, declined the nomination, leaving the party without a candidate.

Meanwhile, however, the state guardianship faction held a meeting in New York and nominated its own candidates for state offices, and their action was later acceded to by a meeting of working men at Albany. It is significant, moreover, that the *Mechanics' Free Press* of Philadelphia favored this faction. Their candidate for governor, however, received only 1,959 votes in the city and county of New York, less than any of their other candidates,²⁷ and only 373 votes outside of the city.

The exciting election of 1830 practically closed the independent career of the various working men's parties. The "twenty-five" faction appears to have finally

²⁶ *Farmers', Mechanics' and Workingmen's Advocate*, Nov. 13, 1830.

²⁷ *Working Man's Advocate*, Nov. 13, 1830.

amalgamated with the Federal Party, and the state guardianship faction with Tammany. A meeting was held, however, by the latter faction on December 28, 1830, which issued a statement of principles similar to its previous utterances. On March 4, 1831, moreover, this faction met to receive the report of a committee previously appointed to prepare an address to the working men of the United States.²⁸ And in the following spring election both factions had candidates.²⁹ As in Philadelphia, however, the approaching presidential campaign cast its shadow before and effectually put a stop to independent political action outside of the big parties.

²⁸ *Farmers', Mechanics' and Workingmen's Advocate*, March 12, 1831.

²⁹ *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer*, April 15, 1831.

I. THE ORIGIN OF THE MOVEMENT

(a) THE MECHANICS REMONSTRATE AGAINST EXTENSION OF THE WORKING DAY BEYOND TEN HOURS

New York Morning Courier, April 25, 1829, p. 2, col. 3. Resolutions passed at a meeting of "Mechanics and others, assembled . . . to consider the propriety of remonstrating against any further extension of the time of a day's work" on April 23, 1829.

. . . RESOLVED, that ten hours well and faithfully employed is as much as an employer ought to receive, or require, for a day's work; and that it is as much as any artisan, mechanic or laborer, ought to give.

RESOLVED, that all men hold their property by the consent of the great mass of the community, and by no other title; that a great portion of the latter hold no property at all; that in society they have given up what in a state of nature they would have equal right to with others; and that in lieu thereof, they have the right to an equal participation with others, through the means of their labor, of the enjoyments of a comfortable subsistence. Therefore,

RESOLVED, that if those in whose power it is to give employment, withhold such employment, or will only give it in such a manner as to exact excessive toil, and at a price which does not give a just return, such persons contravene the first law of society, and subject themselves to the displeasure of a just community.

RESOLVED, that we offer the foregoing as reasons to our fellow citizens for remonstrating against increasing the time long since in this city and elsewhere established, as being sufficient to perform a day's work; and that we trust it will meet with their approbation.

RESOLVED, that we will work for no employer who attempts to violate the rule already by long practice established, and found to be consistent with the best interests of both the employer and the employed. . . .

OLIVER EDSON, Chairman—JAMES QUINN, Secretary.

(b) THEY APPOINT A COMMITTEE OF FIFTY

Morning Courier, April 30, 1829, p. 2, col. 5. Resolutions passed at a meeting of mechanics, &c., on April 28, 1829.

. . . RESOLVED, that the Creator has made all equal.

RESOLVED, that in the first formation of government, no man gives up to others his original right of soil, and becomes a smith, a weaver, a builder, or other mechanic or laborer, without receiving a guaranty that reasonable toil shall enable him to live as comfortable as others.

RESOLVED, that the rights of the rich, or in other words, the employer, are not greater now than they were then.

RESOLVED, that the rights of the poor, or the employed, are not less.

RESOLVED, that those who now undertake to exact an excessive number of hours of toil for a day's work, are aggressors upon the rights of their fellow citizens, invaders of their happiness, and justly obnoxious to the indignation of every honest man in the community.

RESOLVED, that we will not labor for any man more than the just and reasonable time of ten hours a day; and that if our employers are determined to make the experiment, which can longest be suspended, business with them, or with us, the supply of the wants of nature for ourselves and families, we will hold them responsible, as we also hold ourselves, to the good sense of our fellow citizens, for the wrongs we may suffer at their hands.

RESOLVED, that a committee of 50 persons be appoint-

ed to devise the means of assisting those who may require it in consequence of fulfilling the foregoing resolutions, and that they make report at a future meeting.

RESOLVED, that the same committee be authorised and instructed to call another meeting as soon as they shall deem it expedient.

RESOLVED, that the names of those who shall hereafter work more than ten hours a day, or require or receive it, shall be published in the public papers as soon as they shall be ascertained. . .

2. THE AGRARIAN PARTY

(a) THE REPORT AND RESOLUTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE OF FIFTY

Working Man's Advocate (New York), Oct. 31, 1829, p. 1, col. 2. This report was presented at a meeting on October 19, 1829. Though handed in by J. C. Stanley, chairman of the committee, it was written by Thomas Skidmore. Its adoption, according to Robert Dale Owen, one of the secretaries of the meeting, was without due consideration.

. . . Your committee, therefore, feel that all human society, our own as well as every other, is constructed radically wrong; that in the first foundation of government in this state the division of the soil should have been equal, at least, among families; and that provision should have been made (if property must descend in a family line) that it should descend in an equal manner, instead of having been placed at the disposal of the caprice of testators. They even go farther, and say, as their opinion, that inasmuch as the people resident on the soil, at the first formation of our government, had equal right thereto, as individuals, not as members of families, so also had their immediate successors the same right. But this has never been accorded to them; nay, even the families themselves of the first settlers, as we have seen, had nothing of equality existing between them; and, as a certain and natural result, we see thousands of our people of the present day in deep distress and poverty, dependent for their daily subsistence upon a few among us whom the unnatural operation of our own free and republican institutions, as we are pleased to call them, has thus arbitrarily and barbarously made enormously rich.

But though, as your committee believe, it is to this unnatural and unequal organization of society that we

are to look for the prime source of all our oppressions; of that which places over us task masters, with power to require unreasonable toil; with power to withhold an adequate recompense; with power to deny employment altogether; and thus inflict upon us untold suffering; still your committee are sensible that this fountain of your distresses is not to be dried up but by a revolution; a civil revolution, it is true, since three hundred thousand freemen in this state have the power, through their votes at the ballot boxes, to bring it about, without resorting, as most other countries must do, to the use of the bayonet.

But although your committee are sensible that, until a revolution take place, such as shall leave behind it no trace of that government which has denied to every human being an equal amount of property on arriving at the age of maturity, and previous thereto, equal food, clothing, and instruction at the public expense, nothing can save the great mass of the community from the evils under which they now suffer; still they are also sensible, approaching as we are the eve of one of our annual elections, that there is an opportunity offered us of abating, of assuaging, of preventing the aggravation of our calamities, by resorting to the polls, and there electing, if we can, men who, from their own sufferings, know how to feel for ours, and who, from consanguinity of feeling, will be disposed to do all they can to afford a remedy. . . .

[*Omitted*: a lengthy argument against banking institutions "as being next to the original unequal appropriation and transmission to posterity of the soil of the State, the greatest cause of your present unhappy Condition;" an argument against the auction system; and brief arguments against the Brooklyn Ferry Companies, the New York Gas Light Company, imprisonment for

debt, and the general ticket system of electing presidential electors; also a short argument in favor of a single municipal legislative chamber, and in favor of direct election of officials for short terms of service.]

With this observation your committee beg leave to offer the following resolutions.

RESOLVED, that it has become the duty of the people to enquire into the causes of their distresses, and to express their opinions in relation thereto.

RESOLVED, in the opinion of this meeting, that the first and unequal appropriation of the soil of the state to private and exclusive possession, was eminently and barbarously unjust.

RESOLVED, that it was substantially feudal in its character, inasmuch as those who received enormous, because they were unequal, possessions, were lords, and those who received little or nothing, were vassals.

RESOLVED, that hereditary transmission of wealth on the one hand, and poverty on the other, has brought down to the present generation all the evils of the feudal system, and that this, in our opinion, is the prime source of all our calamities.

RESOLVED, that these calamities have been greatly aggravated and increased by a legislation which has employed all its energy to create and sustain exclusive privileges; and that among the objects of such privileges, banking institutions stand most conspicuous.

RESOLVED, that these institutions, as it regards our own state, stand constantly indebted to the public, according to the best of our information, in the sum of thirty or thirty-five millions of dollars.

RESOLVED, if they are to be suffered to remain among us, that they ought no less to pay interest on the debt they owe to the community, than that the community itself should pay interest on any debt it may owe them.

RESOLVED, as banking is now conducted, the owners of the banks receive annually, of the people of this state, not less than two millions of dollars, as interest on their paper money, (and it might as well be pewter money,) for which there is and can be nothing provided for its redemption on demand.

RESOLVED, in this view of the matter, that the greatest knaves, imposters, and paupers of the age, are our bankers; who swear they have promised to pay to their debtors thirty or thirty-five millions of dollars on demand, at the same time that they have, as they also swear, only three, four, or five millions to do it with.

RESOLVED, that more than one hundred broken banks, within a few years past, admonish the community to destroy banks altogether.

RESOLVED, that more than a thousand kinds of counterfeit bank notes, from five hundred dollars down to a single dollar, give double force to the admonition.

RESOLVED, that the Constitution of the United States declares, among other things, that no state shall emit bills of credit; and that, in the opinion of this meeting, all our banking institutions are palpable infractions of that instrument; since if the state, of itself, have not power to emit such bills, it cannot have the power to authorize others to do it.

RESOLVED, according to information derived from official sources, that one auctioneer in this city, puts into his pocket for his year's services, over and above all expenses, more than one hundred and fifty thousand dollars! a sum six times as great as the salary of the President of the United States.

RESOLVED, that the average salary of twelve of these auctioneers exceeds, in the same manner, fifty thousand dollars a year each!

RESOLVED, that the exactions of our banking institu-

tions, and of our auctioneer and other monopolists, are a rapacious and cruel plunder of the people.

RESOLVED, that until these auction and other monopolies can be suppressed, the persons having interest in them, (as well as in the case of the banks,) ought to be compelled by law to pay over to the state, all the monies they make beyond their expenses, except so much as may be a reasonable reward for their personal services, or a just and moderate return for investments.

RESOLVED, that exemption is privilege, and as such, the exemption from taxation of churches and church property, and the property of priests, to an amount not exceeding fifteen hundred dollars, is a direct and positive robbery of the people.

RESOLVED, that, so far as it goes, it is a connection of church with state; since the principle which would remit to a priest the taxes on his property, thus making a gift to him from the public treasury of that amount, might with equal propriety be extended to the payment of his annual salary.

RESOLVED, in the opinion of this meeting, that not less than three or four hundred thousand dollars, are annually plundered from the useful and industrious classes of our citizens, for the want of a lien law on buildings; and that this is a full and sufficient reason why it ought to be granted.

RESOLVED, as an insurmountable reason in favor of a lien law, if there were no other, that it ought to be passed; as with it, the poor and industrious mechanic and laborer can have no power to injure the rich; but without it, the rich may, as they do, plunder the poor of their earnings without restraint.

RESOLVED, that past experience teaches, that we have nothing to hope from the aristocratic orders of society; and that our only course to pursue is, to send men of

our own description, if we can, to the legislature at Albany.

RESOLVED, that we will make the attempt at the ensuing election; and that as a proper step there to, we invite all those of our fellow citizens who live by their own labor, and none other, to meet us at Military Hall, Wooster street, on Friday, the 23d day of October instant, at half past 7 o'clock, then and there to nominate suitable persons for candidates for members of the senate and assembly.

RESOLVED, that we consider such invitation and nomination in this open and public manner, to be respectful to the community, regular and republican. . .

ISAAC ODELL, Ch'n—

WM. G. TILLOU, R. D. OWEN, Sec'ries.

(b) UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE IS BLAMED

New York Journal of Commerce, Nov. 7, 1829, p. 1, col. 2. Editorial.

Our citizens who have not yet voted, have one day more in which they may exercise the privilege of determining whom they will have for their rulers. The old party lines are nearly obliterated, but there has sprung up a new interest which is formidable both for the number of its adherents, and the disorganizing purposes by which they are actuated. By throwing open the polls to every man that walks, we have placed the power in the hands of those who have neither property, talents, nor influence in other circumstances; and who require in their public officers no higher qualifications than they possess themselves. It would be a disgrace to the city and to Republicanism, if a ticket so utterly unworthy as theirs should succeed. New York has not always had her just share of influence in the National and State Legislatures, on account of the character of her representatives; but never was she reduced to such

an extreme of degradation, as she will be should the Agrarian party succeed. Such a result we cannot believe is possible, notwithstanding the melancholy forebodings of one of our contemporaries. We cannot believe that we are so soon reduced to the condition of the Romans, when the popular voice was raised against every honorable distinction; a voice which finally prevailed, to the utter extinction of the Republic.

(c) A "PARTY FOUNDED ON THE MOST ALARMING PRINCIPLES"

Morning Courier and New York Enquirer, Nov. 4, 1829, p. 2, col. 1.
Editorials.

While a party founded on the most alarming principles to civil society has been organizing in the bosom of this devoted city, the coalition newspapers, one and all, have been spending their force and their talent in holding up to ridicule, contempt and detestation, the usages and principles of the old democratic party. Where are the friends of good order now? What is the *New York American* about? What is the *Daily Advertiser* doing? A set of men, who openly proclaim the utter worthlessness of all law, and all religion, have been engaged for six months past in inflaming the minds of the honest mechanics of this city. Now, when we see them in open day, and with a force that astonishes all, these pretended friends of law and right are silent as the grave. Yet they are ready to pounce upon every friend of the republican party, and of its systems and usages.

It is usual, on the last day of the election, to call upon all who have not voted, to turn out and exercise their right of suffrage; but we call upon them under different feelings to those prevailing on any prior occasion. Traitors are in our ranks—men who have long passed

current as genuine and faithful—who have enjoyed, as it now seems, a large share of unmerited influence, have aspired to break down the Regular Nominations of the Democratic party. Look at the last war, and the host of disaffected persons and Hartford Convention-men we had to contend with. What saved the country and bore us triumphantly through all its perils, but the union of the republican party? What secured the election of Madison, of Monroe, and of Thompkins, but the power of the party rallied under the name of Regular Nominations? What has given us, throughout the State, that decided majority we possess, but honest, faithful, and stern devotion to the principles and usages of the Democratic party? Shall we abandon those principles because a few disloyal men led on by ambition and bad feelings, have attempted to sell us to the enemy? We are surrounded by danger—not only to the party, but to the country. The working ticket, got up by a few fanatics, supported by those who know not its origin, and led on by persons without religion or principle, is sweeping every thing before it. Look at it, and ask yourselves if such men should be chosen as Legislators for the first city in the Union? Let every republican turn out this day, and give his vote for the regularly nominated ticket, and by a great and united effort, save this city from being made the sport of ignorance or of unprincipled factionists.

3. THE REORGANIZED WORKING MEN'S PARTY

Address and Resolutions of the Conference Committee of the Wards.

From a pamphlet entitled "Proceedings of a Meeting of Mechanics and other Working Men, held at Military Hall, Wooster-Street, New York, on Tuesday evening, Dec. 29, 1829" (New York, 1830). This pamphlet was reprinted in the *Working Man's Advocate*, Jan. 16, 1830, p. 1, col. 1; and (in part) in *Mechanics' Press* (Utica, N.Y.), Jan. 23, 1830. See also *Free Enquirer*, March 20, 1830; and Hobart Berrian's *Origin and Rise of the Workingmen's Party* (Washington, n.d. [ca. 1841?]).

The following address, resolutions and plan of organization were adopted, after the report of the committee of fifty had been rejected, by "a meeting of nearly three thousand mechanics and other working men" on December 29, 1829. The proceedings of this meeting were published in a pamphlet, as well as in the newspaper organs of the party. It was said that Skidmore attempted to speak, but was not allowed a hearing, and his doctrines were effectually repudiated.

. . . We take this opportunity solemnly to aver, whatever may be said to the contrary by ignorant or designing individuals, or biassed presses, that we have no desire or intention of disturbing the rights of property in individuals, or the public. On the contrary, we consider the acquiring of property to soften the asperities of sickness, of age, and for the benefit of our posterity, as one of the greatest incentives to industry. . . .

Let it then be explicitly understood, that the mechanics, working men, and those friendly to their interests, hold the rights of individuals, both as to property and religion, as sacred as the instrument that declared our independence, or that which binds together these United States. . . .

[*Omitted: Imprisonment for Debt.*]

Another object for which we contend, and which we claim from our national and state legislatures as a right, is the appropriation of our public funds to a reasonable

extent, for the purposes of education, upon a system that shall enable all before the age of twenty-one, to acquire a competent knowledge of the language of their country, arithmetic, geography, history, natural philosophy, geometry and chemistry, as applied to the arts. A system that shall unite under the same roof the children of the poor man and the rich, the widow's charge and the orphan, where the road to distinction shall be superior industry, virtue and acquirements, without reference to descent.

We believe that our existing system of education, if continued, under which many are deprived of all or nearly all its advantages, and which tends in a greater or less degree to separate the children of the poor man and the rich, will eventually lead us into all the distinctions that exist under despotic governments, and destroy our political liberties. We ask if many of the monopolists and aristocrats in our city would not consider it disgraceful to their noble children to have them placed in our public schools by the side of the children of poor yet industrious mechanics; and has not this same feeling extended to a considerable degree already throughout our country? We believe, that as a nation or state, the first subject which should engross our attention, or for which the public funds should be appropriated, is education. When this shall have been effectually attended to, we will cheerfully unite in support of any other just and feasible object. But we do not believe in the right of our legislators to appropriate the public funds for the endowment of colleges and academies, almost solely for the benefit of the rich, while our primary schools have but to a very limited extent secured the advantages even of a partial education to the producing classes of the community.

We ask of our state legislature the passage of a Lien

Law for the security of every individual who shall furnish either labor or materials towards the erection, completion, or necessary repairs of any building. This we demand, that a large portion of our citizens may be as truly secured in their rights, as their more wealthy, but not more worthy, neighbors. That the many hardships we endure, and disadvantages we have labored under, have not been so sensibly felt by the mechanics of the country, is no doubt true. Their situation and ours is materially different; the standing and ability of individuals for whom they labor are more generally known, or easily ascertained, by them, than with us.

The farmers, by whom they are principally employed, are the most industrious, the most virtuous, and all things considered, the most intelligent portion of men, in this or any other country; possessing, as yet, the majority, their rights have been less openly invaded by wealthy or designing politicians. The evils of which we complain, if not immediately redressed, will shortly become equally burdensome and grievous to them. . .

They need but be told that many of our buildings are erected by designing speculators, or master builders, who, when detected, are regularly succeeded by others—that a systematic course of frauds has been practised on the mechanics, laborers, and furnishers of materials for buildings, for years, in this city, to the amount of \$125,000 annually. That the greater part of these losses has fallen upon individuals who have families dependent on their labor for support. That the merchant who vends his merchandise can secure payment, previous to delivery, while the mechanic and producing classes are obliged to fulfil their contracts, or render their services before they can demand such security. That a great part of the distress, experienced in this city during the last winter, originated in these losses. That we are

now, from the same causes, looking forward with fearful forebodings to the events of the present winter.

The farmers need but be truly informed of these facts, to unite with one accord in the passage of a lien law, which would protect us, hereafter, from many otherwise unavoidable evils.

Our present military system, that puts in requisition seven-eighths of our producing classes, on an average, more than three days in a year, or subjects them to excessive fines and imprisonment, should not escape our attention. The annual expense of this system, in time and money, will be found to amount, by a careful examination, to more than a million of dollars, which operates to our detriment as citizens, without benefiting us as soldiers. . . .

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLVED, that we should be unjust to ourselves, to our posterity and the public, were we to suffer the vile slanders that have been unjustly heaped upon us by ignorant and biased individuals and presses to pass unnoticed.

RESOLVED, that we explicitly disavow all intentions to intermeddle with the rights of individuals, either as to property or religion; but that we hold those rights as sacred as life, not to be approached by ruthless despots or visionary fanatics.

RESOLVED, that it is wholly incompatible with human rights, that any free citizen, who has duly surrendered all his property to his creditors, should for one moment be deprived of his liberty.

RESOLVED, that we are in favor of searching laws, for the detection of concealed or fraudulently conveyed property, and emphatically in favor of the entire abolishment of imprisonment for debt.

RESOLVED, that we disapprove of any restriction of

our present jail limits, and that we should consider an abridgment unworthy of the age and country in which we live.

RESOLVED, that its operation would be to compel our unfortunate citizens to live in the most dense part of the city, where the price of real estate and rents would be greatly enhanced, to the manifest injury of other parts of the city.

RESOLVED, that it is the earnest wish of this meeting, that our representatives in the next legislature, early in the session, introduce and support a bill for the abolishment of imprisonment for debt, and, at all events, that they do not tamely submit to any curtailment of our present jail limits.

RESOLVED, that, next to life and liberty, we consider education the greatest blessing bestowed upon mankind.

RESOLVED, that the public funds should be appropriated (to a reasonable extent) to the purposes of education, upon a regular system, that shall ensure the opportunity to every individual of obtaining a competent education before he shall have arrived at the age of maturity.

RESOLVED, that our sentiments, in relation to a well constructed lien law, which would secure to thousands of our fellow-citizens that just recompense their services entitle them to, and prevent innumerable frauds being practised on the producing classes, are well known to our representatives, and that we expect their efficient support of this measure.

RESOLVED, that our present militia system is highly oppressive to the producing classes of the community, without any beneficial result to individuals or the state.

RESOLVED, that the present auction system, which operates as a means of oppressing the producing classes, by introducing large quantities of the products and

labor of foreign countries, which otherwise would be furnished by our own mechanics, is fraught with alarming evils, and should be immediately restricted.

RESOLVED, that this system is most decidedly injurious to the mechanic interest of this city, compelling them in many cases to abandon their business, or dishonestly manufacture very inferior goods for the competition of the auction room.

RESOLVED, that the credit system on duties, at our custom house, which furnishes the auctioneers and foreign importers with an additional capital of fifteen million of dollars, at all times, in this city—the greater part of which is drawn from the producing classes, they being the consumers, is an evil of immense magnitude, and demands our immediate attention.

RESOLVED, that it be earnestly recommended to our representatives in congress to use their efforts to cause the duties on imports to be paid in cash.

RESOLVED, that the banks, under the administration of their present directors and officers, and by the concert of auctioneers and foreigners, aided by custom house credits, form a monopoly that is hostile to the equal rights of the American merchant, manufacturer, mechanic, and laboring man; and that the renewal, by the legislature, of the charters prayed for, will confirm and perpetuate an aristocracy, which eventually, may shake the foundations of our liberties, and entail slavery on our posterity.

RESOLVED, that our post office has not been located with an eye to the general interest and rapid growth of this city, and consequently subjects the laboring classes of the community to great inconveniences; and that it should be immediately removed to the most central part of the city.

RESOLVED, that our courts of justice should be so re-

formed, that the producing classes may be placed on an equality with the wealthy.

RESOLVED, that the present laws, that compel the attendance of jurors and witnesses, for days and weeks, at our courts, without a fair compensation, are unjust, and require immediate alteration.

RESOLVED, that, by affixing enormous bonds to most of the appointed, and many elective offices, our rulers have placed them mostly in the hands of the wealthy or designing politicians and corrupt apostates.

RESOLVED, that it is our deliberate opinion, that the road to appointed offices has in a great measure been closed against those qualifications which in our estimation should be the only criterion, such as talent, application, and moral virtue.

RESOLVED, that with many of our past and present rulers, the greatest qualification to obtain office, is an ability, real or supposed, to render them or their party some political service.

RESOLVED, that there should be no intermediate body of men between the electors and the candidates; that the electors have an undoubted right to enjoy a free and open choice of their representatives, without being subjected to the pains and penalties of denunciation from any class of their fellow citizens.

RESOLVED, that this meeting is fully confirmed in the belief that the best means to obtain suitable candidates, and ensure the unbiassed right of suffrage, are to be found in the two following resolutions, adopted at one of our large meetings, held in Wooster street, in November last:

“RESOLVED, that, in the opinion of this meeting, the state of New York ought to be divided into as many districts as there are members of assembly to represent it.

“RESOLVED, as our settled opinion, that the law which now compels our citizens to vote for eleven members on one ticket, deprives us, the electors, of a proper knowledge of the candidates, is anti-republican, and destructive to the free and unbiassed exercise of the rights of suffrage, inasmuch as it becomes the plausible apology for electing delegates to nominate for the electors, when the electors can and ought to nominate for themselves.”

RESOLVED, that, as faithful sentinels we will guard the temple of our liberties against all further encroachments; that united we will keep the field, and maintain the war, until the justice of our demands shall be fully disseminated and felt throughout these United States, the lost ground regained, and our principles established upon an unchangeable basis.

4. THE SECOND SPLIT IN THE PARTY

(a) THE STATE GUARDIANSHIP PLAN OF EDUCATION

New York Sentinel and Working Man's Advocate, June 19, 1830, p. 4, col. 1-3. Report of the minority [Mr. Grout] of the sub-committee on education. [This report was rejected, according to the above authority, without having been read.]

. . . When your Committee propose a system of republican education for the people, therefore, we propose that it should be the best. Not the most brilliant, not the most extravagantly expensive, not the most fashionable – but the best that the nation, in its wisdom, may be able to devise. We need not be told that it will be imperfect. Everything human is. But if it be only as scientific, as wise, and as judicious as modern experience can make it, it will regenerate America in one generation. It will make but one class out of the many that now envy and despise each other. It will make American citizens what they once declared themselves, “Free and Equal.”

Governed and guided by this principle, your Committee proceed to examine the present system of Public Education, and to consider whether State Schools might with advantage be multiplied on the same model. The principle that your Committee would repeat, is, that Public Education ought to be equal, republican, open to all, and the best which can be devised.

If State Schools are to be, as now in New England, common day-schools only, we do not perceive how either of these requisitions are to be fulfilled. In republican schools, there must be no temptation to aristocratical prejudices. The pupils must learn to consider themselves as fellow-citizens, as equals. Respect

ought to be paid, and will always be paid to virtue, and to talent; but it ought not to be paid to riches, or withheld from poverty. Yet if the children from these State Schools are to go every evening, the one to his wealthy parents' soft carpeted drawing-room, and the other to his poor father's, or widowed mother's comfortless cabin, will they return next day as friends and equals? He knows little of human nature who thinks they will.

Again, if it is to be left to the parent's taste, and pecuniary means to clothe their children as they please and as they can, the one in braided broad-cloth and velvet cap, and the other in thread-bare homespun, will they meet as friends and equals? Will there be no envy on the one side, nor disdain on the other? And are envy and disdain proper and virtuous feelings in young Republicans? Yet if State Schools be day school only, how can there be uniformity of dress? Must not the poor widow dress her children as she can?

But again: is that education the best, which teaches children the common branches of education during six or seven hours each day, and then leaves them to all the bad habits, which children suffered to run will acquire? Here in the city, for instance; is that education the best, by which children spend five or six hours out of the twenty-four in the streets, learning rudeness, impertinent language, vulgar manners, and vicious habits? Will any advantages in school compensate for the disadvantages out of it? But let us remember, it is not the question whether this half-training, (too often less than half) is good enough for the common people. It is the question whether it is the best that can be devised.

For our own parts, we understand education to mean, every thing which influences directly or indirectly the child's character. To see his companions smoke segars is a part of his education; to hear oaths is a part of his

education; to see and laugh at drunken men in the street is a part of his education; to witness vulgar merriment or coarse brawls is a part of his education. And if any one thinks that an education like this (which is daily obtained in the streets of our city) will be counteracted and neutralized by half a dozen hours of daily schooling, we are not of his opinion. We had almost as soon see a child of ours brought up among the Indians, as have him frequent a common day school one half the day, and wander about the streets the other half.

But even if none of these reasons existed, how is the poor laborer or the poorer widow, to keep her children at a day school, until they have received an education equal to that of their richer neighbors? Can the laborer or the widow afford to support their children until they are twelve, fourteen, or sixteen years old, while they peruse the page of science, and obtain the acquirements and accomplishments which form the enlightened, well educated man? Even if no children's tax be levied on them, can they furnish food and decent clothing for their children during the necessary term? And if they cannot clothe their children as well as their neighbors clothe theirs, will they send them to school to be looked down upon or laughed at? If day schools alone are provided, therefore, would not those very children who most require instruction be virtually excluded?

Is not the development of social habits, of the dispositions, of the moral feelings, the most important of the teacher's duties? And what opportunity is there of fulfilling them, unless the pupils be at all times under his very eye and control?

One other strong objection to day schools remains. If agriculture is to form a part of the instruction of all children, it must be taught in seminaries in the country, where the pupil is boarded and lodged, as well as re-

ceived during class hours. We conceive that agriculture ought to form a prominent part of the education of every young republican; both because it is the most necessary and useful of all occupations, and thus affords an independence in the worst reverse of fortune; and also, because, if practically taught in the schools, it will supply a considerable portion of the expense. The pupils may raise their own vegetables, corn, and grain; and these ought to form three fourths, at least, of their food.

We conceive, then, that State Schools, to be republican, efficient and acceptable to all, must receive the children, not for six hours a day, but altogether; must feed them, clothe them, lodge them, must direct not their studies only, but their occupations and amusements; must care for them until their education is completed, and then only abandon them to the world, as useful, intelligent, virtuous citizens.

We do not consider this question regarding day schools and boarding schools as a non-essential matter that may be decided either way without ruin to the cause. We conceive that on its decision depends, in a manner, every thing. On its decision depends whether the system of education which the people call for, shall be a paltry palliative, or an efficient cure: whether aristocracy shall be perpetuated or destroyed; whether the poor man's child shall be educated or not; whether the next generation shall obtain their just rights or lose them.

Your Committee is aware that the proposal will startle some timid spirits, who cannot conceive how the nation will resolve to incur the expense of such a system. And we think it not unlikely, that if the people decide, as we are convinced they will, for such a system at once, its adoption may be somewhat retarded. But it

is better, infinitely better, that it should be somewhat delayed, than that it should be frittered away by half measures, into nothing worth having.

Your Committee propose therefore, a System of Public Education, which shall provide for all children, at all times, receiving them at the earliest age their parents choose to entrust them to the national care; feeding, clothing, and educating them to the age of maturity.

Your Committee propose that all children so adopted, should receive the same food; should be dressed in the same simple clothing; should experience the same kind treatment; should be taught (until their professional education commences) the same branches; in a word, that nothing savoring of inequality, nothing reminding them of the pride of riches, or the contempt of poverty, should be suffered to enter these republican safeguards of a young nation of equals. We propose that the destitute widow's child or the orphan boy should share the public care equally with the heir to a princely estate; so that all may become, not in word, but in deed and in feeling, free and equal.

Thus may the spirit of democracy, that spirit which Jefferson labored for half a century to plant in our republican soil, become universal among us; thus may luxury, may pride, may ignorance be banished from among us; and we may become what fellow citizens ought to be, a nation of brothers.

Your Committee propose that the food should be of the simplest kind, both for the sake of economy and temperance. A Spartan simplicity of regimen is becoming a republic, and is best suited to preserve the health and strength unimpaired, even to old age. We suggest the propriety of excluding all distilled or fermented liquors of every description; perhaps, also, luxuries, such as tea and coffee, might be beneficially dispensed

with. These, including wines and spirits, cost the nation at present about fourteen millions of dollars annually. Are they worth so much?

Thus might the pest of our land, intemperance, be destroyed—not discouraged, not lessened, not partially cured—but destroyed: this modern curse that degrades the human race below the beasts of the field; that offers her poison cup at every corner of our streets, and at every turn of our highways, that sacrifices her tens of thousands of victims yearly in these States, that loads our country with a tax more than sufficient to pay twice over for the virtuous training of all her children—might thus be deposed from the foul sway she exercises over freemen, too proud to yield to a foreign country, but not too proud to bow beneath the iron rod of a domestic curse. Is there any other method of tearing up this monstrous evil, the scandal of our republic, root and branch?

Your Committee propose that the dress should be a plain, convenient, economical uniform. The silliest of all vanities, (and one of the most expensive,) is the vanity of dress. Children trained to the age of twenty-one without being exposed to it, could not, in after life, be taught such folly. But, learnt as it now is, from the earliest infancy, do we find that the most faithful preaching checks or reforms it?

The food and clothing might be chiefly raised and manufactured by the pupils themselves, in the exercise of their several occupations. They would thus acquire a taste for articles produced in their own country, in preference to foreign superfluities.

Under such a system the poorest parents could afford to pay a moderate tax for each child. They could better afford it, than they can now to support their children in ignorance and misery, provided the tax were less than

the lowest rate at which a child can now be maintained at home. For a day school thousands of parents can afford to pay nothing.

Your Committee do not propose that any one should be compelled to send a child to these public schools, if he or she saw fit to have them educated elsewhere. But we propose that the tax should be paid by all parents, whether they send their children or not.

We are convinced, that under such a system, the pupils of the state schools would obtain the various offices of public trust, those of representatives, &c. in preference to any others. If so, public opinion would soon induce the most rich and the most prejudiced to send their children thither; however little they might at first relish the idea of giving them equal advantages only with those of the poorer classes. Greater real advantages they could not give them, if the public schools are conducted as they ought to be.

We propose that the teachers should be elected by the people. There is no office of trust in a republic, more honorable, or more important, nor any that more immediately influences its doctrines, than the office of a teacher. They ought to be chosen, and if we read the signs of the times right, they will be chosen with as much, nay with more care, than our representatives. The Office of General Superintendent of schools will be, in our opinion, an office at least as important as that of President. . . .

This leads your Committee to a consideration of the means by which the funds necessary for a system so complete, may be obtained.

In expressing their opinion that it is the business of government to provide these funds, your committee will be met by the objection, that such a proposal is oppressive and unjust, seeing it is the duty of the individual,

and not of government, to support and educate his own children.

Your Committee reply that every citizen ought to contribute his fair share towards the expenses of legislation; and that education is a most important branch of legislation; as much more important than the criminal law, as "prevention is better than cure." Would not even the rich old bachelor be individually benefitted, (in the most selfish sense of the term) if, instead of having the rogue who broke into his counting-house shut up in the penitentiary, that rogue had been trained to be an honest man, and thus prevented from putting his fingers in the old man's coffers at all? And is it not as cheap, and much more rational and humane to pay for keeping men and women out of the penitentiary, than to pay for putting them in?

Your Committee agree with the people's friend, and firm advocate, the immortal Jefferson, "that the tax which will be paid for educating the common people, is not more than the thousandth part of what will be paid to kings, nobles, and priests, who will rise up among us if we leave the people in ignorance."

Your Committee conceive, that Education is emphatically the business of the government. What is the first and chief end of Government, if not to produce peace and harmony among men? And what means are so effectual to produce peace and harmony, as an enlightened public education? Is it not the magistrate's duty, if he knows that a crime will be committed, to prevent its commission? And do we not all know, that to leave twenty thousand children, as we do now in this very city, to the education of chance, in our streets and alleys, will lead to the commission of crime? Is it not, therefore, clearly and positively, the magistrate's duty to provide for Public Education?

Again, is it not to protect the helpless and oppressed that governments are instituted? And who so helpless and oppressed as a child whose parents will not, or cannot procure for it a useful, rational education? Is not this a species of oppression from which it will probably never recover? which may leave its blighting effects on mind and body, while life remains? If to protest from such oppression, be not a sacred, binding duty of government, what duty is sacred or binding?

We hold the opinion, therefore, that there is no call for the public money, more strictly, and immediately, and essentially for the public benefit, than in the case of public education. And we are further convinced, that there is no expenditure of the people's funds that would be more cheerfully sanctioned by them than this; provided they were satisfied with the system of education itself.

Your Committee are of opinion therefore, that whatever expenses may be necessary for the establishment and support of the National Public Schools, should be borne by Government.

To check improvidence in parents, your committee conceive that it would be prudent and proper to assess a yearly tax, perhaps of five dollars for all children between the ages of three and thirteen years. This would prevent persons from too carelessly incurring the responsibilities of parents, while it would be oppressive to no one, inasmuch as the expenses of a child kept at home in the poorest and most miserable manner would much exceed that amount.

This tax alone, if adopted throughout the Republic, would furnish from ten to fifteen millions annually, to the Public School Fund.

In what manner the surplus above this amount may be raised most beneficially, your committee think it un-

necessary, at this early stage of proceeding, to enquire. Convinced they are that no application of public funds is so essentially beneficial to the people, or would be more willingly sanctioned by them than this, and that the expense to the nation will be but a drop in the bucket, compared to the national benefits therefrom to be obtained.

Among the chief preliminary difficulties, your committee remark the deficiency of competent teachers, and suitable schoolbooks. The first, your Committee conceive, may be surmounted by the establishment of a Model State School, where teachers may be trained; and by rendering the office of public teacher so honorable and desirable, that the best talent in the country would be enlisted for public education. To meet the second, your committee suggest that Government should offer liberal premiums for the best set of school books, a compendium of the useful and liberal arts; the exact sciences, and every other branch of an accomplished and enlightening education.

In conclusion, your Committee would express their firm conviction, that in proportion as the Mechanics and Working Men of our City, of our State, and of our Republic generally, interest themselves in this subject, in proportion as they take a firm, decisive stand, and adopt enlarged and liberal views in regard to Public Education—in the same proportion will be the ultimate success of their cause.

(b) A REPUBLICAN SYSTEM OF EDUCATION

Working Man's Advocate, May 29, 1830, p. 2, col. 2. Report of the majority of the sub-committee on education to the general executive committee.

That the subject of education is considered by your committee of greater importance than any other which is now agitating the public mind.

Satisfied as they are of its importance, they desire to weigh the matter maturely, in order that their conclusions may not seem hasty, and that when fully reported, their plans may, as far as possible, be free from imperfections, and properly arranged to meet the exigency of the times, as well as accommodated to the state of public feeling at the present day.

The committee are in favor of a republican system of education, but while they are convinced of the inadequacy of the present system, they have as yet seen no other that they believe to be perfect in all its parts.

Reports have been made by committees in Philadelphia and Rochester, showing much labor and research, but, as your committee believe, susceptible of many improvements.

The committee have been directed to examine a report handed in by a minority of the committee, which minority consists of one only of the seven composing the standing committee on this subject. The report was based upon, and in fact consisted of, sundry essays on the subject, as your committee believe, from the pen of R. D. Owen, and published editorially in the *Daily Sentinel*. While your committee are willing to be advised at all times, and without reference to the source from whence the advice emanates, they are still unwilling to adopt any gentleman's ideas on this subject before they are convinced of their utility and propriety, as well as applicability. Of the propriety of the system proposed in the report alluded to, your committee are not only not convinced, but they are satisfied that it is radically wrong; that it is, in fact, but a specious attempt insidiously to palm upon the committee and the great body of the working classes the doctrines of infidelity. Your committee are determined to support, without deviating to the right hand or to the left, the sentiments

adopted by the working men on the 29th of December last. While they are unchangeably in favor of granting to all men the free enjoyment of their own private opinions on all subjects of this nature, they are solemnly resolved, never to support any attempt to palm upon any man, or set of men, the peculiar doctrines of infidelity, agrarianism, or sectarian principles.

Your committee cannot refrain at this time, from giving their decided disapprobation of those journals, which, professing to advocate the cause of the working men, have undertaken to dictate to us a particular system of education – which have represented and still continue to represent that their peculiar views are approved of by the great body of the mechanics and working men, knowing at the same time, that a committee, appointed for that special purpose, was in progress, preparing a report.

This attempt to forestall public opinion, and to counteract the efforts of the committee, we consider in direct opposition to the principles which should govern all true democrats, and savors much of real Tammanyism.

While your committee do not wish to induce any person to join our cause, by the tempting doctrines of an equal division of property, and of boarding and clothing all children in the land, they strenuously contend for a republican system of education, but upon a plan that shall leave to the father and the affectionate mother the enjoyment of the society of their offspring.

If the committee are allowed to proceed in their deliberations, without further encroachments, they are satisfied that in due time, they will be enabled to prepare a report that will be satisfactory not only to the committee, but to the public generally. Your committee, in accordance with this view of the subject, have prepared the following resolutions:

RESOLVED, that the report on the subject of education, submitted to your committee by a minority, embracing a system of guardianship and support, is unwise in its details, impolitic in its operations, at variance with the best feelings of our nature, and based upon the doctrines of infidelity.

RESOLVED, that the report be rejected.

RESOLVED, that we utterly disapprove of those journals which have endeavored to palm upon the public this system as one that is approved of by the great body of the working men.

RESOLVED, that this report and these resolutions be signed by the Chairman and Secretary, and published.

H. G. GUYON, Chairman – A. L. BALCH, Secretary.

5. FRANCES WRIGHT ON "THE PEOPLE AT WAR"

Extract from an article by Frances Wright in the *Free Enquirer*, Nov. 27, 1830, p. 38.

THE PEOPLE AT WAR. What a season of deep interest is the present! . . .

What distinguishes the present from every other struggle in which the human race has been engaged, is, that the present is, evidently, openly and acknowledgedly, a war of class, and that this war is universal. It is no longer nation pitched against nation for the good pleasure and sport of Kings and great Captains, nor sect cutting the throats and roasting the carcasses of sect for the glory of God and satisfaction of priests, nor is it one army butchering another to promote the fortunes of their leaders—to pass from a James to a George or a Charles to a Louis Philip the privilege of coining laws, money and peers, and dividing the good things of the land among his followers. No; it is now every where the oppressed millions who are making common cause against oppression; it is the ridden people of the earth who are struggling to throw from their backs the "booted and spurred" riders whose legitimate title to starve as well as to work them to death will no longer pass current; it is labor rising up against idleness, industry against money, justice against law and against privilege. And truly the struggle hath not come too soon. Truly there hath been oppression and outrage enough on the one side, and suffering and endurance enough on the other, to render the millions rather chargeable with excess of patience and over abundance of good nature



FRANCES WRIGHT

Champion of the Cause of Labor, of Free Education, and of
Woman's Rights

*(From an oil painting in the possession of her grandson, Wm. M. Guthrie
of Sewanee, Tennessee)*

than with too eager a spirit for the redress of injury, not to speak of recourse to vengeance.

It has been long clear to me that in every country the best feelings and the best sense are found with the laboring and useful classes, and the worst feelings and the worst sense with the idle and the useless. Until all classes shall be merged into one however by gradual but fundamental changes in the whole organization of society, much bad feeling must prevail every where. . . .

6. PROSPECTS OF THE WORKING MEN

Editorial from the *Working Man's Advocate*, Dec. 11, 1830, p. 1, col. 2.

PROSPECTS OF THE WORKING MEN. The beneficial effects which have resulted from the efforts of the Working Men of this state to gain their just rights, have never been more apparent than they are at this moment. The prospects of ultimate success have never been more fair and flattering. Hungry expectants, with pack saddles prepared, and ready, booted and spurred, to ride them into office, have been disappointed in their anticipations—sycophantic presses, whose reward depended on success, are seeking new fields for adventure—unsuccessful parties are divided and discouraged, and the dominant one is tottering to its foundation—while those who remained firm in their principles are flattered and courted. Many of the reforms called for by the Working Men are now acknowledged to be just and reasonable, and are even advocated by several of the presses which have hitherto supported the party in power, and there is little doubt that the ensuing session of the legislature will relieve them from a share of their oppressive burdens. This partial success in the harbinger of future triumphs, and affords the greatest encouragement for perseverance. The measures are founded in truth and justice; and "Truth is powerful, and will prevail." Whether these measures are carried by the formation of a new party, by the reform of an old one, or by the abolishment of party altogether, is of comparative unimportance; but we can see no reason why the Working Men should not persevere in the course they have hitherto pursued, retaining for their motto, "Measures—not men."

IV

THE NEW ENGLAND
ASSOCIATION OF FARMERS,
MECHANICS AND OTHER WORKING MEN

INTRODUCTION

Though not exclusively a wage-earners' movement, the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics and other Working Men was similar in general character to the working men's party as it developed in the smaller cities of New York, Pennsylvania and Delaware. The organization of the New England Association was, moreover, preceded and accompanied by a political movement, and in Massachusetts the working men's party was a distinct factor in politics from 1830 to 1834. There were organizations, moreover, of farmers, mechanics and working men, not only in Boston, but in a number of the smaller towns of Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont, Rhode Island and Connecticut.

At the spring election of 1830 the working men of New London, Connecticut, elected two representatives and a senator to the state legislature.⁸⁰ But it was the working men of Woodstock, Vermont, who appear to have given the real impetus to the New England movement. A meeting was held at Woodstock on July 7, 1830, and its proceedings were widely distributed throughout New England and were read at meetings in Boston, Massachusetts; Burlington and Middlebury, Vermont; Calais, Maine; and other places. Later there was published at Woodstock the *Working Man's Gazette*, which printed at the head of its editorial column a list of "Working Men's Measures" practically identical with the list published by the *Mechanics' Free Press* of Philadelphia. Similar meetings were held and reso-

⁸⁰ *Mechanics' Free Press*, April 17, 1830.

lutions adopted at Dedham, Northampton, and Dorchester.

The first meeting in Boston was held in August, and the resolutions adopted prove that the movement made a wider appeal to the community, to small employers and tradesmen, as well as to farmers and mechanics, than did the platforms of the New York and Philadelphia working men. In December, 1830, the Boston working men nominated candidates for municipal offices,⁸¹ and the next spring had a full ticket of sixty candidates in the field. One candidate, who was also, however, on the Independent ticket, received 443 votes.⁸²

The movement spread to other parts of New England and in December, 1831, a meeting was held at Providence, Rhode Island, of delegates of "mechanics and workingmen," which voted to call a convention to meet in Boston the following February. At this convention Dr. Charles Douglass was made president, and a constitution was adopted for the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics and other Working Men. A communication, moreover, was received from a meeting of mechanics and working men in New York, and a report was adopted on education in manufacturing districts which excited considerable comment throughout New England. In September of the same year another convention was held in the State House at Boston which set before itself as part of its immediate business "the expediency of a National Convention . . . representing the Working Men of the United States." Other conventions were held in October, 1833, at Boston, and in September, 1834, at Northampton, Massachusetts.

Meanwhile, the working men had obtained some political success, notably at Charlestown, and in 1833 and

⁸¹ *Mechanics' Free Press*, Dec. 4, 1830.

⁸² *Boston Chronicle*, May 14, 1831.

1834 they nominated candidates for state offices in Massachusetts. Their candidate for governor in each of these years was the Hon. S. C. Allen, who, in accepting the first nomination, issued a letter which was incorporated in the proceedings of the 1833 New England convention, and was somewhat widely copied and noticed for its radical sentiments. At the 1833 election Allen received 504 votes in Boston as compared with 2,734 for Davis, the successful candidate,³³ and in 167 towns, 1,966 votes, as compared with 18,931 for Davis.³⁴ In Cambridge the working men elected one representative.

In 1834 the Massachusetts state convention was held at Northampton immediately after the convention of the New England Association, and probably overshadowed, if it did not practically absorb, the latter. Nevertheless, it was stated by an opposition paper that there were only fourteen persons present at the state convention. This paper added, after the election, that the votes received by Allen were "about in the same proportion; they are hardly worth naming as scattering—not as many, by considerable, as he obtained last year."³⁵

By this time, however, the trade-union movement had arisen in Boston and throughout New England, and the working men abandoned the more general protest against existing conditions for the clear-cut demands of the trade-union policy.

³³ Boston *Courier*, Nov. 12, 1833.

³⁴ Boston *Daily Advertiser and Patriot*, Nov. 14, 1833.

³⁵ Boston *Courier*, Nov. 19, 1834.

I. THE BOSTON WORKING MEN'S PARTY

(a) ITS PLATFORM

Boston Courier, Aug. 28, 1830, p. 2, col. 1. Resolutions adopted at a meeting of "Working Men, Mechanics, and others friendly to their interests," in Boston, August 17, 1830.

1. That we are determined by all fair and honorable means, to exalt the character, and promote the cause, of those who, by their productive industry, add riches to the state, and strength to our political institutions.

2. That we exclude from our association none, who, by their honest industry, render an equivalent to society for the means of subsistence which they draw therefrom.

3. That we regard all attempts to degrade the working classes as so many blows aimed at the destruction of popular virtue—without which no human government can long subsist.

4. That we view with abhorrence every attempt to disturb the public peace by uniting with political doctrines any question of religion or anti-religion.

5. That the establishment of a liberal system of education, attainable by all, should be among the first efforts of every lawgiver who desires the continuance of our national independence.

6. That provision ought to be made by law for the more extensive diffusion of knowledge, particularly in the elements of those sciences which pertain to mechanical employments, and to the politics of our common country.

7. That, as we hold to the natural and political equality of all men, we have a right to ask for laws which shall protect every good citizen from oppression, contumely and degradation.

8. That we are opposed to monopolies, under what-

ever guise they may be imposed on the community—whether in the shape of chartered institutions for private gain; or in that of taxes, levied, nominally for the public good, on the many for the advantage of the few.

9. That we regard the multiplication of statutes, and the mysterious phraseology in which they are ordinarily involved, as actual evils, loudly demanding correction.

10. That the people have a right to understand every law made for their government, without paying enormous fees for having them expounded by attorneys—by those perhaps who were instrumental in their construction, and in rendering them incomprehensible, even to themselves.

11. That every representative chosen to declare the sentiments of the people, is bound to obey the popular voice, and to express it, or resign his trust forthwith.

12. That we are resolved to advocate, as one of our leading objects, the entire abrogation of all laws authorizing the imprisonment of the body for debt—at least until poverty shall be rendered criminal by law.

13. That we will endeavor by all practicable means to obtain a reform in our militia system.

14. That for the purpose of securing these objects, we will adopt a system of social discipline: hereby organizing ourselves under the title of Working Men of Boston.

15. That, for the furtherance of this plan, we recommend that a general meeting of our brethren and friends in the city, be held at an early day, for the purpose of selecting two delegates from each Ward, and two from South Boston, in order to constitute a General Executive Committee.

(b) A LIBEL ON THE COMMUNITY

Boston *Courier*, Sept. 17, 1830, p. 2, col. 3-4, from the Springfield (Mass.) *Republican*. Editorial on "The Working Men's Party."

This new party which commenced in the city of New-

York about a year since, has spread to many other places in that State, and to some cities and villages in New-England. The only places in this Commonwealth in which we recollect to have noticed an organization of this party, are at Boston and Northampton. The avowed objects generally seem to be, to abolish imprisonment for debt; the abolishment of litigation, and in lieu thereof, the settlement of disputes by reference to neighbors; to establish some more equal and universal system of public education; to diminish the salaries and extravagance of public officers; to support no men for offices of public trust, but farmers, mechanics and what the party call "working men;" and to elevate the character of this class by mutual instruction and mental improvement, so as to qualify them for distinction in society. Much is said against the wealth and aristocracy of the land, their influence, and the undue influence of lawyers and other professional men.

The most of these objects, as avowed, appear very well on paper, and we believe they are already sustained by the good sense of the people. We have not been able to see the pretended magnitude of the evils complained of by the "working men," (although professing to be of that class,) at least in this part of the country, or the necessity of correcting them by the organization of an express party. And we can think no better of the objects and motives of some who agitate this party, than we do of the anti-masonic party. What is most ridiculous about this party is, that in many places where the greatest noise is made about it, the most indolent and most worthless persons, men of no trade or useful occupation, have taken the lead. We cannot of course answer for the character for industry of many places where this party is agitated; but we believe the great body of our own community, embracing every class and profession, may

justly be called working men; nor do we believe enough can be found who are not such, to make even a decent party of drones. The very pretension to the necessity of such a party, is a libel on the community. . . .

2. NEW ENGLAND CONVENTION OF 1832

(a) CALL FOR THE CONVENTION

Columbian Centinel (Boston), Feb. 15, 1832, p. 3, col. 1.

Notice is hereby given, that according to a vote of the delegates from various parts of New England, assembled at Providence, R.I., on Monday the fifth day of December, 1831, a General Convention of Mechanics and Working Men, will be holden at Marlborough Hotel, in Boston, to-morrow. The object of that Convention is, to mature measures to concentrate the efforts of the laboring classes, to regulate the hours of labor, by one uniform standard, to promote the cause of education and general information, to reform abuses practised upon them, and to maintain their rights, as American Freemen. It was resolved, at the meeting in December last, that the Mechanics and Working Men of New England, generally, be requested to send delegates to represent them in the Convention at Boston, to-morrow. It is hoped that the importance of the object will stimulate all concerned, to adopt early and decisive measures, to carry it into effect. By order of

C. W. SAUNDERS, Chairman – J. FRIEZE, Secretary.

(b) THE CONSTITUTION

The Co-operator (Utica, N.Y.), April 3, 1832.

CONSTITUTION, New-England Association of Farmers, Mechanics, and other Working Men.

ARTICLE 1. This Association shall be called the New England Association of Farmers, Mechanics and other Working Men.

ARTICLE 2. This Association shall consist of such persons of good moral character, as may sign this consti-

tution, under such restrictions or regulations, as may hereafter be incorporated into the By Laws.

ARTICLE 3. Each and every person that shall sign this constitution, except practical farmers, shall, so long as he may remain a member of the Association stand pledged on his honor, to labor no more than ten hours for one day, unless on the condition of receiving an extra compensation, at the rate of one tenth part of a day's wages, for each extra hour he may labor, over and above the said ten hours per day. And any member offending against the provisions of this article, shall forthwith be expelled.

ARTICLE 4. No person while a member of this Association, shall submit to any deduction in a bill by an employer, nor consent to accept, as payment in full for any bill, a less sum than the full amount thereof—unless by the decision of a court of law, or by a body of referees, jointly appointed, unless his bill shall be found erroneous, either in its details or total amount. And every member offending against the provisions of this article, shall be forthwith expelled.

ARTICLE 5. In each town and manufacturing village, where there may be fifteen members of this Association, they shall constitute an auxiliary branch of the same. They shall organize themselves, elect such officers as they may deem expedient, and frame and adopt their own By Laws not repugnant to the Constitution and By Laws of this Association. And the members less than fifteen, residing in any town or village, may unite themselves with any auxiliary branch they may think proper.

ARTICLE 6. Each auxiliary branch thus duly organized, shall hold a meeting annually, on or before the first Thursday in August, for the appointment of one or more delegates to represent them in the general Convention. And the Secretaries of such auxiliary associ-

ations, shall furnish the delegates thus chosen, with certificates of their election, the number of their members, the number received, and the names of those expelled during the preceding year, and also such votes, resolutions, instructions, &c. as those bodies may have passed or adopted, relative to the meeting or doings of the General Convention. All of which shall be handed over to the General Secretary at the annual meeting of the General Convention. It shall also be the duty of such Secretaries, to correspond with the General Secretary from time to time, as they may be directed by their respective association, and whenever they think proper.

ARTICLE 7. The General Convention shall consist of one or more delegates from each auxiliary association, and hold a meeting annually on the first Thursday in September, at such place as may have been determined on at the next previous annual meeting; and may adjourn, from time to time, to such time and place as the majority may determine. Fifteen members shall constitute a quorum to transact business but any member may adjourn from time to time, till a quorum be formed.

ARTICLE 9. For the purpose of defraying the necessary expenses, and to create a fund for the relief of distressed members, and meet future exigencies, each auxiliary association shall levy and collect a tax of fifty five cents, annually, on each of its members. And the money thus collected shall be paid into the general Treasury, at the annual Convention, to be vested, secured and disposed of, as the Convention may determine.

ARTICLE 12. At each annual meeting, there shall be an auditor appointed, whose duty it shall be to receive all demands presented against the Association, and to examine them, and to decide on their correctness and justice, and when of opinion that they should be liqui-

dated, he shall write on the face of them the word audited, to which he shall affix the day and date of the month and year, together with his signature, and no demand shall be liquidated by the Treasurer that is not thus audited.

ARTICLE 13. There shall be a Committee appointed by each Auxiliary Society, who shall have power to relieve the distresses of any member of this Association, who may have been thrown out of employ, by having conformed to the provisions of this constitution, and draw on the General Treasurer for reimbursement of the sum or sums thus paid out.

ARTICLE 14. Any alteration or amendment may be made in this constitution, at any annual meeting of the General Convention, each auxiliary association or its Secretary, having been notified of the same in writing, at least four weeks previous to the meeting at which such alteration or amendment may be proposed, two thirds of the members present voting in the affirmative.

(c) REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Free Enquirer, June 14, 1832. This report on education was also published in the *Co-operator*, April 3, 1832, and in other contemporary journals.

The Committee appointed to take into consideration the subject of the education of children in manufacturing districts, have attended to that duty, and beg leave to report:

That from statements of facts, made to your committee, by delegates to this body, the number of youth and children of both sexes, under sixteen years of age, employed in Manufactories, constitute about two fifths of the whole number of persons employed. From the returns from a number of manufactories, your committee have made up the following summary, which, with some few exceptions and slight variations, they are fully

persuaded will serve as a fair specimen of the general state of things. The regular returns made, include establishments in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island; which employ altogether, something more than four thousand hands. Of these, sixteen hundred are between the ages of seven and sixteen years. In the return from Hope Factory, Rhode Island, it is stated that the practice is, to ring the first bell in the morning, at ten minutes after the break of day, the second bell at ten minutes after the first, in five minutes after which, or in twenty five minutes after the break of day, all hands are to be at their labor. The time for shutting the gates at night, as the signal for labor to cease, is eight o'clock by the factory time, which is from twenty to twenty five minutes behind the true time. And the only respite from labor during the day, is twenty five minutes at breakfast, and the same number at dinner. From the village of Nashua, in the town of Dunstable, N.H., we learn that the time of labor is from the break of day, in the morning, until eight o'clock in the evening; and that the factory time is twenty five minutes behind the true solar time. From the Arkwright and Harris Mills in Coventry, R.I., it is stated that the last bell in the morning rings and the wheel starts, as early as the help can see to work; and that a great part of the year, as early as four o'clock. Labor ceases at eight o'clock at night, factory time, and one hour in the day is allowed for meals. From the Rock-land Factory in Scituate, R.I., the Richmond Factory, in the same town, the various establishments at Fall River, Mass., and those at Somerworth, N.H., we collect similar details. At the numerous establishments in the village of Pawtucket, the state of things is very similar, with the exception of the fact that within a few weeks, public opinion has had the effect to reduce the

factory time to the true solar standard. And in fact, we believe these details to serve very nearly, to illustrate the general practice.

From these facts, your committee gather the following conclusions—1. That on a general average the youth and children that are employed in the Cotton Mills, are compelled to labor at least thirteen and a half, perhaps fourteen hours per day, factory time. And 2. That in addition to this, there are about twenty or twenty five minutes added, by reason of that time being so much, slower than the true solar time—thus making a day of labor to consist of at least fourteen hours, winter and summer, out of which, is allowed, on an average not to exceed one hour, for rest and refreshment. Your committee also learn, that in general, no child can be taken from a Cotton Mill, to be placed at school, for any length of time, however short, without certain loss of employ; as, with very few exceptions, no provision is made by manufacturers, to obtain temporary help of this description, in order that one class may enjoy the advantages of the school, while the other class is employed in the mill. Nor are parents, having a number of children in a mill, allowed to withdraw one or more, without withdrawing the whole; and for which reason, as such children are generally the offspring of parents, whose poverty has made them entirely dependent on the will of their employers, and are very seldom taken from the mills to be placed in school.

From all the facts in the case it is with regret, that your Committee are absolutely forced to the conclusion, that the only opportunities allowed to children generally, employed in manufactories, to obtain an education are on the Sabbath, and after half past 8 o'clock of the evening of other days. To these facts however, your Committee take pleasure in adding two or three others

of a more honorable character. It is believed that in the town of Lowell, no children are admitted to the labors of the mills, under twelve years of age; and that the various corporations provide and support a sufficient number of good schools, for the education of those that have not attained that age. In the Chicopee Factory Village, Springfield, Mass., and also in the town of New Market, N.H., we also learn that schools are provided, and the children actually employed in mills, allowed the privilege of attending school, during a portion, say about one quarter of the year. Your Committee mention these facts as honorable exceptions to the general rule, with a desire to do justice to all concerned, and the hope that others may be inspired by their example, to go much farther still, in their efforts to remove the existing evils. A few more instances of the above character may exist; but if so, they have not come to the knowledge of your committee, and they have every reason to believe them to be extremely rare.

Your committee cannot therefore, without the violation of a solemn trust, withhold their unanimous opinion, that the opportunities allowed to children and youth employed in manufactories, to obtain an education suitable to the character of American freemen, and the wives and mothers of such, are altogether inadequate to the purpose; that the evils complained of are unjust and cruel; and are no less than the sacrifice of the dearest interests of thousands of the rising generation of our country, to the cupidity and avarice of their employers. And they can see no other result in prospect, as likely to eventuate from such practices than generation on generation, reared up in profound ignorance, and the final prostration of their liberties at the shrine of a powerful aristocracy. Deeply deploring the existing evils, and deprecating the dreadful abuses that may be

hereafter practiced, your committee respectfully recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

RESOLVED, that a committee of vigilance be appointed in each state represented in this convention, whose duty it shall be to collect and publish facts respecting the condition of laboring men, women, and children, and abuses practised on them by their employers: that it shall also be the duty of said committee, as soon as may be, to get up memorials to the Legislatures of their respective states, praying for the regulation of the hours of labor, according to the standard adopted by this Association, and for some wholesome regulations with regard to the education of children and youth employed in manufactories; and to make report of their doings at the meeting of this body, on the first Thursday of September next. . . .

V

GENERAL TRADES
UNION OF NEW YORK AND VICINITY

INTRODUCTION

The General Trades' Union of New York City and Vicinity grew out of a carpenters' strike in the spring of 1833. The carpenters demanded an increase in wages from \$1.37½ to \$1.50 per day, and were supported in their demand by a number of other trades, including the printers, tailors, masons, brush-makers, and tobaccoists. After about a month's struggle, they won their strike. Soon afterwards the printers,³⁶ who had been especially active in support of the carpenters, issued a circular calling upon the various trade societies to send delegates to a general convention of the trades. At the first meeting of this convention, on July 15, delegates were present from nine trade societies, and three others sent communications approving of the formation of a General Trades' Union.

The following December there was held a general meeting and procession of the Trades' Union in which twenty-one societies and about four thousand persons participated. About fifty banners were carried in the parade, including the general standard of the Union, "a tasteful painting, representing Archimedes raising the globe with a fore shortened lever resting on the peak of a mountain for a fulcrum."³⁷ The next year, at its first anniversary celebration, the New York Trades' Union was joined by the Newark societies, and formed

³⁶ The "Typographical Association of New York" was itself only about two years old at this time.

³⁷ *Pennsylvanian*, Dec. 9, 1833, p. 3, col. 1.

a procession a mile and a half long.³⁸ The second anniversary celebration appears to have been equally imposing.³⁹

The first president of the Union and its orator upon a number of public occasions was the Hon. Ely Moore, of the Typographical Association, who in the fall of 1834 was nominated for Congress by Tammany, and was finally elected after a lively campaign in which "the mechanics, artizans and working men" took an active part. In the same year, Ely Moore was elected the first president of the National Trades' Union. Thus Tammany catered to the working men, and thus the working men of New York supported the bank policy of Jackson's Administration.⁴⁰

The Trades' Union appears to have been strengthened rather than weakened by the political success of its "favorite son." It made no efforts, however, in the direction of independent political action, and was apparently satisfied to allow its members to follow in the wake of Tammany. Nevertheless, when the State Prison Commissioners, of whom Ely Moore was one, issued a report which was unsatisfactory to a large number of the members of the Union because it recommended the employment of prisoners under certain conditions on various public improvements, whereas the unions generally demanded the total abolition of prison labor, the excitement was carried into the Trades' Union convention. A number of trades even expressed their dissatisfaction by demanding the resignation of Ely Moore as president of the Union. The official organ, however, the *National Trades' Union*, stood by him, and the storm

³⁸ *National Trades' Union*, Sept. 27, 1834.

³⁹ *New York Evening Post*, Aug. 31, 1835.

⁴⁰ For accounts of political meetings of working men and resolutions passed, see *The Man*, April 4, 1834, the *New York Evening Post*, April 3, and May 8, 1834, and the *Working Man's Advocate*, Oct. 11, 1834.

finally subsided, though not without having seriously injured the popularity of labor's first congressman.

Fairly complete proceedings of the Union from the middle of 1834 to the middle of 1836 have been preserved, and these show that its activities were almost wholly industrial. During that period it supported strikes of the bakers, hatters, rope-makers, sailmakers, cabinet-makers, stone-cutters, cordwainers, weavers, curriers, leather-dressers, tailors, and other trades in New York, and strikes of various trades in Poughkeepsie, Brooklyn, and Newark. It also furnished aid to strikes in Boston, Philadelphia, and other cities. The *New York Journal of Commerce* stated that "the different Trades are combined together in what is called a 'Trades' Union,' and each in its turn is supported by the others in striking for higher wages."⁴¹

Most of the strikes in New York City and its neighborhood were for increases or against decreases in wages. The ten-hour day was already established, and some trades in New York even enjoyed a nine-hour day. Strikes on account of wages, however, were common in 1835, and increased in frequency in 1836, when the advance in prices began to be seriously felt. The advance in rents and prices was mentioned in that year in wage demands of the journeymen tin-plate and sheet-iron workers, slaters, shipwrights and caulkers, coach-makers, masons, riggers, carpenters, and others. The carpenters, in March, 1836, demanded an increase to \$1.75 per day, and three months later a further increase to \$2.00 per day. The second increase was probably not obtained, as in March, 1837, the journeymen renewed the same demand.⁴²

One of the most powerful unions in New York City

⁴¹ *New York Journal of Commerce*, April 3, 1835.

⁴² *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer*, March 9, June 13, 16, 1836, March 4 and 17, 1837.

at the time of the organization of the Trades' Union was that of the journeymen tailors. A strong beneficial society of tailors, which appears to have regulated wages,⁴³ had existed for many years, and in January, 1833, the Union Trade Society of Journeymen Tailors was formed, apparently backed by the beneficial society. About three months after the organization of the Trades' Union, the tailors struck for higher wages, with the approval of the union. Their financial support, however, appears to have come from the different societies.

In January, 1836, the tailors again went on a strike, this time against a reduction in wages. They were supported by the Trades' Union, the United Benevolent Society of Journeymen Tailors, the Ladies' Cordwainers, the carpenters, the bookbinders, the pianoforte makers, the rope-makers, the cabinet-makers, the hatters, and a number of other trades, including the tailors and bookbinders of Philadelphia. On the other hand the employers appear to have combined and decided to make a test case of the tailors. Twenty* of them were arrested for conspiracy, and, after a trial which was attended by large crowds, were convicted. Their friends immediately paid their fines, but the trial and decision created intense excitement. The daily papers took sides, denouncing and defending the judge. An inflammatory placard, afterwards known as the "Coffin Handbill," called for a mass meeting in the Park, upon the day when the sentence was to be pronounced. Later a meeting was held in the Park which was attended, ac-

⁴³ A writer in the *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer*, May 28, 1833, spoke of the Tailors' Society as "now many years in existence; and perhaps the only one, in this city, enabled to ensure the privileges of the hard-working mechanic." "The wages of tailors in New York," he said, were better, "comparatively speaking, than those of any other class."

* See report of this case, vol. iv, 315-334.

ording to the estimate of the *Evening Post*, by 27,000 people.⁴⁴

At this meeting the working men again resolved to go into politics. A state convention of mechanics was called to meet at Utica the following September in order to secure the repeal of the conspiracy laws, to reform the judiciary system, and to require candidates for popular suffrage to declare in writing their political principles. The banking system and prison labor were also condemned by the mechanics and working men. The new party was christened by the name, Equal Rights, which had long been a slogan of the working men. Later its enemies called it and it came to be generally known as the Loco-foco Party.

The Utica convention nominated for governor the working men's candidate of 1830 for lieutenant-governor, and enough working men went over to the Equal Rights party to deprive Tammany Hall of the control of the city. Ely Moore, however, ran ahead of his colleagues on the Tammany ticket and was reëlected to Congress.

Little more is heard of the Trades' Union, which appears to have ended, where the labor movement of the period began, in politics. There was even some effort to prove that the Equal Rights Party was merely the Working Men's Party of 1829 and 1830 under a new name.

⁴⁴ *National Laborer*, June 18, 1836, p. 51, col. 1. Quoted from the *New York Evening Post*.

1. THE CARPENTERS' STRIKE

(a) THE JOURNEYMEN'S STATEMENT

Morning Courier and New York Enquirer for the country, May 21, 1833, p. 3, col. 3. Preamble and Resolutions adopted at a meeting of journeymen house-carpenters, May 17, 1833. Other meetings were held at which similar resolutions were passed.

. . . TO THE CITIZENS OF NEW YORK. We, the Journeymen House Carpenters of the city of New York, have struck out for our rights, and are determined to stand till we obtain them. As we have been imposed upon a long time by the Master Builders, we are determined to bear it no longer, and we think that the public, if acquainted with our situation, will coincide with us, and lend us a helping hand towards obtaining our end. We ask no more than justice, and are determined to have it. We leave it to a discerning Public to decide for us.

RESOLVED, that in the estimation of every honest journeyman mechanic, who considers that a fair and equivalent compensation ought to be awarded to them by their employers for their services, they cannot refrain from expressing their decided disapprobation against the high handed measure adopted by a few interested individuals who have assumed the power to control and dictate to the great body of independent Journeymen House Carpenters of the city of New York.

RESOLVED, that as the Independent Journeymen House Carpenters of the City of New-York have no object in view, whereby they will be the cause of procrastinating the finishing of buildings now under progression, they disclaim all insinuations that may be advanced to the contrary, honestly declaring, as they now

do, that their only desire is to obtain from their employers a remuneration equal to the services rendered.

RESOLVED, that having no wish to create dissention or animosity between themselves and their employers; and having every desire to lend their aid in advancing the rapid improvements now in contemplation in the city, the Journeymen House Carpenters fully expect that, in justice to the community at large, their employers will see the propriety of "rendering justice where justice is due."

ANDREW TURNBULL, Chairman.
WM. E. ERRETT, Secretary.

(b) "THE AMERICAN SYSTEM AMONG THE
JOURNEYMEN"

New York Journal of Commerce, June 1, 1833, p. 2, col. 1. Editorial.

We see by notices in the papers, that the Journeymen of various other branches of business are rallying to sustain the Carpenters. Well, their cause is as good and worthy of support as the combinations for the same purpose in any other occupation. Just as good as the combinations, where they exist, among lawyers, or doctors, or merchants, or manufacturers, or newspaper editors, or any body else. Yet we apprehend that many will condemn the combination of Journeymen, who think it very right for employers to combine to keep up the prices of their commodities, or even to keep down the price of labor. But according to our notions of the obligations of society, all combinations to compel others to give a higher price or take a lower one, are not only inexpedient, but at war with the order of things which the Creator has established for the general good, and therefore wicked. . . .

The means resorted to, to cement and sustain the combinations, whether they are simple individual pledges, or legislative enactments, or menaces and violence, are all wrong, and in spirit equally so. The plans of each

class have their distinctive evil features. The combinations of journeymen and others whose income is from labor, are characterised with less craft and studied plot, but with more of direct appeals to force or fear. Disguise it as the associates may, no such combination is sustained but by threats at least. There will always be a large number who are indisposed for the combination. These will keep up the operations of the trade, and unless forced into the ranks, render the combination abortive. It is surprising how such persons are deprived of their self possession, and drawn into the general league. The principal threat is, that the combinants will never again permit those who do not join them, to have employment. The expedient to accomplish this, is the same to which the doctors and lawyers resort for the same purpose, viz, that the combinants will never consult—work with one who is not of their number. . . .

Combinations among journeymen are usually set on foot by the dissolute, improvident, and therefore restless; and in the outset chiefly sustained by the second and third rate class of hands. There is one thing about this infatuation at which we confess our astonishment. It is, that prime hands so readily enter into combinations for a general average of price. It is a partnership in which some put in capital and others bankruptcy, yet all are to take out and share alike. Men whose wages would go up to the desired point, if they would but go upon their own merits, consent to stand in the attitude of lifting up the unworthy, though they sink themselves proportionably.

Turn-outs are always miserably profitless jobs. If they are successful they cannot in the long run benefit the class whose wages are raised; for the diminution in the quantity of occupation and the increased number of labourers drawn to the spot, will more than compensate

for all the gains. If a day's work receives a higher reward, that advantage will be more than counterbalanced by days spent in idleness for want of occupation. The journeymen carpenters, now, in a harvest time, when all hands were employed, have turned out for an additional shilling. For this, they throw away the certainty of eleven shillings. They have stood out some twenty days, so that their certain loss is already more than equal to the gain they demand, upon six months labor: and they are in no little danger of being displaced altogether by workmen who are coming in from surrounding places, and who, not being acquaintances of the turn-outs, are effectually beyond the reach of their influence. To the master-carpenters, we repeat what we said some days ago, that it is their duty, and the duty of all good citizens, to set their faces like a flint against all such combinations. . . .

2. THE GENERAL TRADES' UNION

(a) TYPOGRAPHICAL ASSOCIATION CIRCULAR

Rise and Progress of the General Trades' Union of the City of New York and its Vicinity, by John Finch, 1833. John Finch, president of the Typographical Association, laid this circular before that body on June 22, 1833, and requested that a committee be appointed to assist in forming a "General Union of Trades." The circular was approved and the committee appointed.

CIRCULAR. To the Journeymen Mechanics and Artisans of New-York.

The time has now arrived for the mechanics of our city to arise in their strength and determine that they will no longer submit to the thralldom which they have patiently borne for many years, nor suffer employers to appropriate an undue share of the avails of the labourer to his disadvantage. This is evident from the noble and energetic efforts which they recently made to sustain their brethren, the Independent Journeymen House Carpenters, when demanding their rights. They have now become alive to the necessity of combined efforts for the purpose of self-protection; and a few enterprising men have determined to call a meeting to effect a general union of the Journeymen Mechanics and Artisans of every branch, in this city.

On account of the many facilities which Printers possess for disseminating information, and their decided conviction of its utility, the "Typographical Association of New York," appears destined to take the lead in this grand movement, and its members, as far as is in their power, will use their utmost endeavours to consummate so desirable an object. The Committee, therefore, submit the following as their view of the manner in which this design may be attained.

1. Let each Society, Trade, or Art in the city, call a meeting of its members, and appoint three delegates to meet in General Convention, to hold office for one year.

2. Let this Convention appoint from its own body, a President, Vice-president, Recording and Corresponding Secretaries, and a Treasurer.

3. For the purpose of enabling this Convention to render efficient aid, in case they should be called on by any branch of mechanics or artisans who may be there represented, a capitation tax of one cent, or more, per week, shall be levied on every journeyman in the city, which, in case of a strike, shall entitle all paying it to such sum, weekly, as the Convention may determine can be afforded from the funds.

4. When the members of any trade or art shall feel aggrieved, and wish to advance their wages, they shall, by their delegates, make a representation of their grievances to the Convention, who shall deliberate on the same, and determine whether or not it is then expedient for the members of such trade to demand an advance; and should they determine that a resort to a strike is necessary, then all of this trade who shall have contributed to the funds their regular quota, shall be entitled to receive a specific sum until their difficulties are adjusted. If a combination of employers should in any manner be entered into, to reduce the present rate of wages, the Convention shall be always bound, to the extent of their means, to sustain the journeymen in their efforts to repel all such attempts.

This Committee would respectfully suggest that the first meeting of delegates should take place on Monday evening, July 15, 1833, at 7 o'clock, p.m., at Stoneall's, corner of Fulton and Nassau streets. All trades approving the sentiments of this Circular, will please to appoint their delegates accordingly, and address a note

signifying the same, with the names of their delegates, to either of the undersigned Committee.

JOHN FINCH, EDW. S. BELLAMY, WILLOUGHBY LYNDE.

(b) PRELIMINARY CONVENTION

Morning Courier and New York Enquirer, July 26, 1833, p. 2, col. 6.

The formal organization of the union was said to have taken place on August 28, 1833, but the proceedings of this meeting have not yet been found.

To the Journeymen Mechanics and Artisans of New-York and Vicinity.

In compliance with a call from a circular issued by the "Typographical Association of New-York," inviting the different trades to appoint delegates to meet in Convention, at Mr. Stoneall's Shakespeare Hotel, to form a general union of trades, for the protection of their mutual rights, a meeting was held on Monday evening, 15th inst., at which Mr. Isaac Odell was called to the chair, and Messrs. James McBeath and John H. Bowie appointed Secretaries.

Delegates from the following Trades and Associations appeared and took their seats, viz: Union Society of Journeymen House Carpenters, Typographical Association of New York, Journeymen Book-Binders' Association, Leather Dressers' Association, Coopers' Society, Carvers and Gilders, Bakers' Society, Cabinet Makers' Society, Journeymen Cordwainers' Society, (men's branch).

Communications were received from the Sail Makers' Society, from the New York Tailors' Society, and from the Journeymen Tailors of Brooklyn, all of which expressed sentiments favorable to the formation of such a union.

On motion it was unanimously resolved, that we form a Convention, to be called a "General Trades' Union." Resolved, that a committee of one from each Delega-

tion be appointed to draft articles of organization for the Convention; and that the following persons compose said Committee, viz: Ely Moore, of the Typographical Association; Rob't Townsend, Jr., House Carpenters; Rob't Beatty, Book Binders; John H. Bowie, Leather Dressers; Wm. McDonald, Coopers; John J. Heim, Carvers and Gilders; Philip Ryan, Bakers; J. D. Pearson, Cabinet Makers; Henry Walton, Cordwainers. Resolved, that a committee of three be appointed to publish the proceedings of this meeting, and also to invite the different Mechanics and Artisans of New York and vicinity, who are not now represented in this Convention, to appoint three Delegates to attend at our next meeting, which will be held on Wednesday Evening, July 31st, at Mr. Cronly's House, 15 Park Row. Resolved, that the Secretaries and Mr. Billings Hayward, compose said Committee. . .

(c) CONSTITUTION

National Trades' Union, Aug. 9, 1834, p. 1, col. 1-2. This constitution was adopted on August 14, 1833.

ARTICLE I. This association shall be called the "General Trades' Union of the city of New-York, and its vicinity."

ARTICLE II. The business of the Union shall be conducted by a Convention, to consist of three delegates from each Trade or Art; to be elected by, and to belong to the body they represent. Each delegation shall hold office for one year.

ARTICLE III. The officers of this Convention shall consist of a President, Vice President, Recording and Corresponding Secretaries, a Treasurer, & a Finance Committee of seven (including the Vice President,) to be elected annually by ballot.

ARTICLE IV. The President shall preside at all meet-

ings of the Convention, and preserve order therein; shall put all questions, and announce the decision; and in case of an equality of votes, shall give the casting voice. He shall also direct the labors of the Corresponding Secretary; call, in conjunction with the Secretaries, all meetings of the Convention; and do all other things that may of right appertain to his office.

ARTICLE V. The Vice President shall officiate in the absence of the President. He shall also, by virtue of his office, preside at all meetings of the Finance Committee, whose accounts, when audited, he shall authenticate by his signature.

ARTICLE VI. It shall be the duty of the Recording Secretary, to keep correct minutes of all meetings of the Convention, and to read the minutes of the last at each successive meeting. He shall sign the call for all meetings of the Convention.

ARTICLE VII. The Corresponding Secretary shall, by direction of the Convention, or the President, conduct all the correspondence of the Union, and keep a correct copy of the same. He shall also assist the Recording Secretary at all meetings of the Convention, and sign all calls for such meetings.

ARTICLE VIII. The Treasurer shall receive all moneys from the Finance Committee, and pay all drafts approved and passed by them. He shall keep a correct account of all expenditures, and of the funds in hand; and when they amount to one hundred dollars, he shall report accordingly to said Committee, and hold the same subject to their order. He shall report at every regular meeting of the Convention.

ARTICLE IX. The Finance Committee shall meet monthly, and shall receive the dues of the members from the delegates, and pay the same over to the Treasurer, taking his receipt. When the funds amount to

one hundred dollars, they shall report the same to the Convention, and deposite the same according to the direction of said Convention. The committee shall give an order on the Treasurer for all the necessary expenses of the Convention, not to exceed ten dollars; but all disbursements above that sum, must be first agreed to by said Convention. The Committee must also receive and take charge of all bonds and documents, and all other property committed to their care. The Committee shall keep true minutes of their proceedings, and submit the same to the Convention at each regular meeting. No officer (except the Vice President) shall be a member of this Committee. No two members of this Committee shall be chosen from the same delegation.

ARTICLE X. Each delegation shall make out, from time to time, as occasion may require, a correct list of the names of all members of the Union, in their respective Trades or Arts, and report the same to the Convention. They shall also receive the monthly dues from their body, and deliver the same to the Finance Committee at their monthly meetings, taking their receipt therefor.

ARTICLE XI. The members of each body belonging to the Union, shall, through their delegates, pay the sum of six and a fourth cents monthly, into the funds of the Convention.

ARTICLE XII. The funds of the Convention shall be appropriated to defray all necessary expenses; to maintain the present scale of prices to all members who are fairly remunerated; to raise up all such as are oppressed; to alleviate the distresses of those suffering from the want of employment; and to sustain the honor and interest of the "Union."

ARTICLE XIII. Each Trade or Art may, through their

delegates, represent their grievances to the Convention, who shall take cognizance thereof, and decide upon the same.

ARTICLE XIV. No Trade or Art shall strike for higher wages than they at present receive, without the sanction of the Convention.

ARTICLE XV. The Convention shall have the power to call a general meeting of the members of the Union, whenever they shall deem it expedient.

ARTICLE XVI. The regular meetings of the Convention shall take place on the last Wednesday of every month. All extra meetings shall be called by the President and Secretaries; notice thereof to be published two days previous to such meeting.

ARTICLE XVII. The members of any Trade or Art may join this Union at any time, by organizing themselves, sending their delegates, and conforming to the rules and regulations agreed to by the Convention.

ARTICLE XVIII. This Constitution shall not be altered or amended, except at a regular meeting of the Convention, due notice of such amendment to be given in writing, at least one month previous thereto, with the exception of the 11th Article, which may, in case of a strike, be altered or amended at a regular or special meeting. All amendments, or alterations, must receive the sanction of two thirds of this Convention. . .

(d) PROCEEDINGS, 1834-1836

The Man, June 15, 1834, p. 3, col. 1.

GENERAL TRADES' UNION. At a meeting of the Convention held last evening, it was unanimously—

RESOLVED, that the different trades represented in this Convention, and the Mechanics and Working Men generally, be requested to hold meetings as early as possible in order to take the most effective measures that can

be adopted, in order to sustain the journeymen bakers in their present attempt to obtain their rights.

RESOLVED, that an appeal be made to the public to know at once whether a few individuals are to be sustained in their endeavors to keep their journeymen in a worse condition, bodily and mentally, than that of the beast.

RESOLVED, that a Committee be appointed to draft the same, and that said committee consist of the following persons, viz. Robert Townsend, Eli Moore, John H. Bowie, David Scott, Wm. Howitt, and Robt. Beaty.

ELI MOORE, President.

JAMES McBEATH, JOHN H. BOWIE, Secretaries.
June 13th, 1823 [1833].

The undersigned committee of the Trades' Union recommend to the Public, and the Mechanics and Working Men in particular, as the most effectual means of assisting our cause, to bestow their patronage on those employers, and those only, who give their men the full wages.

WILLIAM HEWITT, THOS. BONNER, DAVID SCOTT,
ROBT. BEATY, JOHN H. BOWIE.

[Names and addresses of thirty-three employers, who gave full prices, omitted.]

National Trades' Union, Aug. 30, 1834, p. 2, col. 4.

The following persons have been elected officers of the "General Trades Union," for the ensuing year: Ely Moore, *president*, David Scott, *vice president*, James McBeath, *recording secretary*, James B. Anderson, *corresponding secretary*, John Brown, *treasurer*. *Finance Committee*: William B. Smith, Seth T. Clark, Richard Sharp, Ephraim Aurniss, Henry Ennis, Henry E. Insley.

National Trades' Union, Nov. 8, 1834, p. 2, col. 3.

[October (misprinted November) 29] . . . Cre-

credentials were received from the House Carpenters' Society, appointing Ebenezer Ford, and Barnes Bennet as delegates to fill the vacancies of Robert Townsend, Jr. and William B. Paddon, whose term of service expired on the 28th of August, and from the Cabinet Makers, appointing Thomas M'Donald a delegate in the place of Richard Smith, resigned; also from the Cordwainers' Society, of Poughkeepsie, appointing Thomas Haight as their delegate to the General Trades' Union.

The credentials were, on motion, approved, and the delegates were invited to take their seats in the Convention. . . .

Mr. Isaac Odell then arose, and after a few preliminary remarks, offered the following resolution, which was, on motion, adopted, viz: resolved, that a special committee be appointed to examine our financial concerns for the past year, and make a full report thereon. The committee was ordered to consist of five persons, who were appointed by open nomination, as follows: Isaac Odell, John H. Bowie, James B. Anderson, Oramel Bingham, Barnabas S. Gillespy.

It was then resolved, that the Finance Committee report the proceedings of their meetings, and if any member be absent for two successive meetings without a satisfactory excuse, he shall be considered as having vacated his seat in the Finance Committee, and the Convention shall proceed to fill such vacancy. . . .

The Secretary then read the names of those Societies who have returned a list of all their members and of those who have not, in order to obtain a complete list from each Society, (from which arose a discussion to settle the time they should make their proper returns,) and also how we are to determine who are members of the Union, and entitled to draw from the funds.

Whereupon it was resolved, that a Committee of five

be appointed to investigate the law, regulating the returns of members, and to devise equitable rules to distribute the funds in case of strikes, &c. The following persons were appointed said Committee, by open nomination, viz: John H. Bowie, Henry Ennis, Ephraim Ford, Robert Beatty, James M. Glover. . .

National Trades' Union, Dec. 6, 1834, p. 2, col. 5, 6.

[November 26] . . . A communication from the Sail Maker's Society, was then read, stating the appointment of John Brown, William Herren, and John C. Zimmerman, as their Delegates for the ensuing year. A communication was received from the Stone Cutters, appointing Mr. Samuel Smith, as a delegate in the place of John Keane, resigned. Also, a communication from the Cordwainers (men's branch) stating the appointment of Jeremiah W. Clark and Henry M. Jackson, as their delegates in the place of Henry Walton and Ephraim Furniss, resigned. The credentials were approved, and the Delegates invited to take their seats in the Convention.

The special committee on Finances presented a lengthy report on the subject, containing the different amounts paid in by each Society, as dues or subscriptions, and all other monies that have been received, with an account of the expenditures during the year, stating the different items in the account of expenditures. The Report was, on motion, accepted and the committee discharged.

The committee appointed to examine the Law to regulate membership, and to devise a plan for the equitable distribution of the funds in cases of strikes, &c. reported the result of their deliberations, which were accompanied by four additional sections to the By-Laws, bearing on the subject for which they were appointed. The following was the first which was, on motion,

adopted, viz: "Each Delegation shall furnish the Recording Secretary, with a correct list of all the Members of the Union in their respective Trades, every three months." The others, after being read, were laid over for further consideration till next meeting. . . .

The President then read a letter he received from Captain Partridge, offering proposals to deliver a course of lectures on Political Economy, &c. before the members of the Trades' Union. After considerable discussion on the subject, the President was instructed to return our thanks to Capt. Partridge, and inform him that we deem it inexpedient to accept his proposals at present. . . .

National Trades' Union, Dec. 20, 1834, p. 2, col. 4, 5. Special meeting.

[December 15] . . . The Corresponding Secretary explained the call of the meeting by stating that the Journeymen Hat Makers are at present labouring under difficulties with some of their employers. The delegates from the Hatters were then called upon for some explanation. They stated that the employers, who are the cause of the present difficulties, did at the formation of their Society discharge (for a short time) all the journeymen in their employ who became members; they afterwards gave them employment, but began to complain of the list of prices. The journeymen made the alteration in prices they wished, and all was apparently settled: the employers then found another ground for objection to the list of prices, which the journeymen readily altered to meet their views; the employers then came out with what was evidently their intentions in the first instance, and declared that they would not employ any journeymen who belonged to, or was connected with the "General Trades' Union;" they therefore discharged all such men from their employ.

It was then stated that two delegates from Newark,

N.J., on business with the Hatters, were in the house; they were, on motion, invited up in the room by Mr. Commerford, who was appointed for that purpose. The delegates from Newark stated that they were not from the Hatters of Newark, but from two of the different branches of the Cordwainers, who having received information from the Secretary of the Hatters' Society of their grievances, and soliciting aid to support them in their stand, their Societies have met, and they have in their possession an amount of money appropriated for the benefit of the Hatters' Society; they also stated that the other Trades in Newark were making exertions to support them in their stand.

A Committee of three, in conjunction with the delegates from the Hatters, were requested to retire, and draft some suitable resolutions on the occasion. Messrs. Bowie, Commerford, and Gillespy, composed said Committee. The Committee having returned, reported through Mr. Bowie, who stated that the employers were wholesale dealers, and not engaged in the retail business, therefore they could not adopt at present any resolutions that would directly meet them on their own grounds; but they have no doubt that the journeymen's rights are infringed upon; they have prepared a rough draft of resolutions, which will require some revision. The resolutions were submitted to a committee of five, who were appointed by the chair as follows, viz.: J. H. Bowie, Jno. Commerford, Barnabas S. Gillespy, Robt. Beatty, and John Todd, who withdrew to make the necessary revision.

A communication from the Bakers' Society was then read, which stated the appointment of John Todd and John Hovill as their delegates for the ensuing year. A communication from the Chair Makers, appointing John Commerford, Chas. S. Wright, and Thomas Man-

ahan, as their delegates for the ensuing year; also, a communication from the Tailors, appointing Mr. D. Rose as a delegate, in the place of G. G. Clarkson, resigned. The credentials were approved, and the delegates invited to take their seats in the Convention.

The Corresponding Secretary then read two communications from the "Trades' Union" of Boston, on the subject of Machinery for spinning Rope Yarn, which is about to be introduced into the public service, near Boston, with a memorial on the same subject, addressed to the Navy Department of the U.S., which memorial is intended to be signed by the delegates of the "Trades' Union," and forwarded to the Hon. the Secretary of the Navy. After some discussion, the Memorial, &c. was ordered to be laid on the table till the regular monthly meeting, which takes place next week.

The Committee on resolutions having returned, reported the following, viz.: resolved, that when any Employer undertakes to say whether a man shall, or shall not, belong to any particular Society, we consider it an attempt at proscription, and a direct infringement of personal rights, which merits our decided reprobation. Resolved, that we will sustain the Hatters as far as we can individually. Resolved, that this Convention recommend that the various Societies, belonging to the Union, meet as soon as possible, and adopt such measures as they may deem necessary to sustain the Hatters in their present struggle. Resolved, that if the employers persist in endeavoring to destroy the Association of Hat Makers, we will consider it our duty to resort to such measures as will enable us effectually to reach their interest. After the resolutions were read, they were, on motion, unanimously adopted. . . .

National Trades' Union, Jan. 17, 1835, p. 2, col. 2. Special meeting.

[January 7] . . . A communication from the "House Carpenters" was read, stating the appointment of Andrew E. Turnbull, as a Delegate in the place of Isaac Odell, resigned. A communication from the "Brush Makers" was then read, appointing Henry E. Insley, Joseph Hufty, and James Adams, as their delegates for the ensuing year. Also a communication from the "Silk Hatters," appointing George Barrow and Samuel Stinson, as delegates, in the place of Joseph Dean and Thomas Ridley, resigned. The credentials were all approved, and on motion, the delegates were invited to take their seats in the Convention.

To a call being made for the Report of the Finance Committee, the members present of said Committee, stated that the Chairman and acting Secretary were both absent, they were therefore unable to make any satisfactory report, further than the Committee have never met for organization. The Resolution adopted in October last, providing for the filling of vacancies in the Finance Committee, in cases of neglect of duty, was then brought forward, and after some discussion on its Constitutionality, the subject was laid over till the next meeting.

The memorial from Boston, on "Machinery for spinning Rope Yarn," was then brought up for consideration, when a discussion ensued, on the utility of "Labor saving machines" in general, and their effects on the working classes; this being a subject they were not called upon to investigate at present, they returned to the original question. It was then proposed that the delegates sign the memorial, and amended by substituting an approval of the memorial to be signed by the officers in behalf of the Trades' Union.

The additional articles to the By-Laws, as reported

by the Committee at the last monthly meeting, was then taken into consideration, viz:

2d. In cases of strikes, stands, or turn-outs, reference must be made to the list of the trade on the strike given into the Convention at least three months previous to said strike. Those whose names are found on said list, who have continued paying members up to the period of said strike, shall be entitled to receive from the funds of the Union, the weekly allowance already agreed upon; also all persons who have been members of their society for three months, whose accounts are settled on the books of their society, who may have left the city, but returned again, and become members previous to the strike, shall receive the usual weekly allowance, and none others whatever shall have any claim upon the funds of the Union.

3d. In case of any member of the Union wishing to leave the city during a strike of the trade to which he belongs, he may draw one months' allowance in advance, provided he will guarantee to the Union that he will not return until the matter is settled.

4th. In all cases where the assistance as above prescribed is insufficient to sustain any trade, the Convention may grant them a loan or gratuity, but this must be sanctioned by the approval of two-thirds of the societies represented in the Union, the vote of two of the delegates to be considered the vote of the society they represent.

Article 2d (article 1st having been read and adopted at a previous meeting) was read, and on motion adopted. Article 3d was then read, and after some discussion, was on motion ordered to be expunged. Article 4th was read, and on motion adopted.

Mr. Hovil, from the Baker's society, stated that his society was laboring under some pecuniary embarrass-

ments, and there being a balance due them from the Union he wished to come to settlement, he was referred to the Finance Committee, who are fully empowered to adjust their claims. . . .

National Trades' Union, Jan. 31, 1835, p. 2, col. 2, 3.

[January 28] . . . Communications were received from the following Trades, viz: "The Rope-Makers of Brooklyn" and the "Block and Pump-Makers," appointing their delegates for the ensuing year; also, from the "Sail-Makers' Society" appointing one delegate to fill a vacancy. The candidates were approved, and the delegates invited to take their seats in the Convention.

The report of the Finance Committee, stating the receipts since the first of November last, was presented and approved. The Treasurer presented his report of receipts and disbursements, since November last, showing a balance in hand of \$255.09½ — approved.

The resolution, offered in October last, directing vacancies in the Finance Committee, to be filled in certain cases, was brought up, decided to be agreeable to the constitution and adopted.

The delegates from the "Journeyman Hat-Makers" made a favourable report, in regard to their present struggle to sustain themselves as a Trades' Union Society.

The delegates from the "Rope-Makers of Brooklyn" reported to the Convention, that Messrs. Schemerhorn and Banker have made a reduction of the Journeyman's wages from \$1.50 to \$1.25 per day, and discharged all their Journeyman, who would not consent to such reduction. They stated that from this procedure of Messrs. Schemerhorn and Banker nine or ten hands were out of employ. Upon the reception of this report, it was resolved, that the "Rope-Makers of Brooklyn" be authorized to draw upon the Finance Commit-

tee for the usual allowance for their members, who are at present out of employ as represented.

The following amendments to the Constitution and By-laws were presented by Mr. Oramel Bringham, and ordered to be published in the "National Trades' Union."

AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 2nd. *Section 1st.* The business of this Union shall be conducted by regularly appointed delegates from each Trade or Art; to be elected by, and belong to the body they represent and to hold office for one year.

Section 2nd. The number of delegates appointed by each society, shall be in proportion to the number of members comprising such society, as follows: each society whose members do not exceed twenty, shall be represented by two delegates, and every society consisting of a larger number than twenty shall be entitled to one delegate for every additional twenty-five members until the number amounts to ninety-five, after which one delegate shall be added for every additional fifty.

ARTICLE 3d. The officers of this Convention shall consist of a President, Vice-president, Recording and Corresponding Secretaries, a Treasurer and a Finance Committee, all of whom, except the Finance Committee, shall be elected annually by ballot.

ARTICLE 5th. *Section 1st.* The Vice-president shall, in the absence of the President, preside at all meetings of the Convention, and shall perform all duties belonging to that office.

Section 2nd. He shall preside at all meetings of the Finance Committee, but shall not vote on any question, unless the Committee should be equally divided, in which case he shall have the casting vote. He shall also authenticate the accounts of the Finance Committee with his signature.

ARTICLE 9th. *Section* 1st. The Finance Committee shall consist of one member from each society, to be appointed or elected by such society from the number of its delegates, and no member of said committee shall be eligible to any other office under this Constitution.

Section 2nd. They shall each deliver to the Vice-president of this Union at every stated meeting, the amount due from their respective societies, who shall authorize the Secretary of the Committee to give a receipt for the same, and then pay the amount received to the Treasurer, taking his receipt for the whole amount.

Section 3d. They shall hold regular monthly meetings on the Wednesday evening preceding the stated meetings of the Convention, and shall present a written report of all their proceedings, at such stated meeting.

Section 4th. When the funds amount to one hundred dollars, over and above the necessary expenses of the Union, they shall report to the Convention, and said Convention shall authorize at least three of the Committee to receive the amount from the Treasurer and deposit it at the direction of the Convention.

Section 5th. The committee must also receive and take charge of all bonds or documents and all other property of the Union committed to their care.

ARTICLE 10th. Each delegation shall procure from their Secretaries, a correct list of all the members of the Union, in their respective societies, once in three months, and present the same to the Secretary of the Finance Committee.

BY-LAWS—ARTICLE 2nd. At the hour of meeting, the Recording Secretary shall call the roll, and if a majority of the societies comprising the Union shall be represented by one delegate it shall form a quorum.

ARTICLE 15th. If any society, or association, shall

be in arrears for dues for three months, notice thereof shall be given by the Corresponding Secretary to the Secretary of said society, or association, and if at the expiration of the fourth month they shall still be in arrears, they shall be suspended from all pecuniary advantages in case of a strike, and shall not be entitled to a voice in the proceedings of the Convention. . . .

The Man, March 2, 1835, p. 1, col. 1 ("Reported for *The Man*"). Also in *National Trades' Union*, Feb. 28, 1835, p. 2.

[February 25] . . . A communication from the Hat Makers' Society was then read, stating the appointment of Matthias F. Spencer, as a delegate, in the place of James M. Glover, resigned. Mr. Spencer being present, was, on motion, invited to take his seat in the Convention.

On a call being made for the Finance Committee's Report, they stated that they were not able to present a full report at this time, but would read the minutes of their meetings, which was, on motion, considered satisfactory.

The Treasurer read his Report of receipts and disbursements for the past month, leaving a balance on hand of \$307.84½. The Corresponding Secretary, in making his report, read several communications, among which was one from the Corresponding Secretary of the Trades' Union of Albany and its vicinity, which contained a defence of the Report of the Commissioners appointed to investigate our State Prison system, with regard to its interference with the labor of the honest mechanic. Whereupon, Mr. Bowie arose and stated his views of said report in very strong language, and offered the following resolution, which was adopted by a rising vote, viz: resolved, that a committee of five be appointed, to draw up resolutions expressive of our

opinions of the State Prison Monopolies, and especially of the Report from the Commissioners lately appointed on that subject—said resolutions to be reported at the next meeting. The following persons were by open nomination appointed on the committee: John Commerford, Oramel Bingham, Barnabas S. Gillespy, John Crygier, and Henry E. Insley. Mr. Moore made some explanations respecting his course as one of the Commissioners, and several of the delegates expressed their opinions on the subject.

A communication was then presented for reading, from the Stone Cutters' Association, but it having no signature attached to it, was necessarily excluded. The Secretary of said Society being in the room immediately signed it, when it was again presented to be read. Some of the members present being partially acquainted with its contents, and considering its language to be very indecorous, objected to having it read. After some discussion, which was conducted with much warmth and feeling, the question was taken, which decided that it could not be read.

Mr. Hays, of the Typographical Association, stated, that some of their members had come to a stand against a decrease of wages. It was resolved, that the subject be referred to the Finance Committee, with powers. The Rope Makers' delegates reported that their stand had concluded to their satisfaction. The Hat Makers' delegates reported that they are situated the same as at last report. Mr. Gillespy then stated that he had noticed a store in the Bowery with a sign purporting it to be "Trades' Union Hat Store;" he wished for some information on the subject. It was then stated that said store belonged to Elisha Bloomer, (of State Prison Monopoly notoriety,) who has assumed that sign to

obtain custom. It was resolved, that this Convention publish a disclaimer against the "Trades' Union Hat Store."

It was then resolved, that the Finance Committee receive from the Treasurer all the funds in his possession over and above \$50; and that three of them, as trustees, deposite the same in the Mechanic's Bank. Mr. Gillespy offered the following Resolution, which was laid on the table till next meeting. Resolved, that it is expedient that we establish a room as an Intelligence Office, or Room of Call, where the journeymen out of employ, who belong to this Union, may call and leave their names and trade, and the employers wanting hands are to be directed there for them.

The Man, March 17, 1835, p. 1, col. 3. Also in *National Trades' Union*, March 14, 1835, p. 2, col. 1. Special meeting.

[March 12] . . . The object of the meeting was principally to take into consideration the situation of the Cabinet Makers. Mr. Gillespie explained the nature of their case. It was to establish their new Book of Prices, the old Book, adopted in 1810, having been found deficient in various particulars; the new Book, he stated, was calculated, he thought, to obviate all the difficulties growing out of the old Book. After some further remarks from one or two more of the members of that branch of business, the proceedings of the Meeting of the Cabinet Makers (heretofore published) were read. In these proceedings, the Cabinet Makers expressed their determination to unite in establishing the new Book of Prices. A resolution was offered and adopted, requesting the employers to leave the room. A Committee of seven was, on motion, then appointed, to confer with the Cabinet Makers, and requested to report at the next Meeting. The following Delegates were appointed by open nomination: O. Bingham, H.

E. Insley, A. E. Turnbull, C. S. Wright, H. M. Jackson, Ely Moore, and J. Commerford.

The Committee appointed at the last Meeting to draw up resolutions relative to the State Prison Monopoly, and especially of the Report of the State Prison Commissioners, reported that they were not able to agree.

Mr. Bowie offered some remarks in relation to the communication from the Stone Cutters, which was presented at last meeting and excluded. He stated that, notwithstanding it might, in the estimation of some, contain indecorous language, the Convention had no right to deny it a reading. After some further discussion, a motion was made that the minutes of the last Meeting be read, which was carried. They were, on motion, unanimously adopted.

After which, Mr. Bowie rose to enquire why a resolution adopted at the last Meeting had been withheld from publication. He was informed by the Chairman of the Publishing Committee, that the resolution in question was suppressed by order of a majority of the Committee. Mr. Bowie replied, that such power was never given the Committee by the Convention. Mr. Howard briefly stated in answer, that the specific duty of that Committee was, to superintend the reported journal of their proceedings, and determine what part should be published. Here the discussion ended. . .

The Man, March 30, 1835, p. 1, col. 1, 2; quoted from *National Trades' Union*, March 28, 1835, p. 2.

[March 25] . . . A communication was received from the Stone Cutters, which stated the appointment of John Keane as a delegate, in the place of Gilbert Cameron withdrawn. After the communication was read, Mr. Gillespie presented a document, which he stated was a protest from Mr. Cameron, against the accept-

ance of Mr. Keane. He wished it to be read previous to acting upon Mr. Keane's credentials. The chairman decided that reading said document would be out of order at this stage of our business, but would be attended to in proper time. A communication was received from the "Leather Dressers," appointing William Murphy as a delegate, in the place of Charles Reynolds resigned. Also a communication from the "Curriers," appointing John H. Bowie and James Potter, in the place of J. H. Bowie and Thomas McDannell resigned. The credentials were all approved, and the delegates were, on motion, invited to take their seats in the Convention.

The Committee on the subject of State Prison Monopolies, and the Commissioners' Report, being now called upon, their report was read by the chairman of said Committee. It contained our sentiments respecting State Prison Monopolies, as have already been expressed, particularly in our Memorial to the Legislature on the subject, and with respect to the "Commissioners' Report," they are decidedly opposed to their views of the subject, and their plans for relieving the Mechanics from their present intolerable burden. The report and resolutions, taken altogether, was not such as would meet the sanction of the Convention, it was therefore referred back to the Committee, for them to report again at our next meeting. The Committee appointed at last meeting to confer with the Cabinet Makers, reported, that they have met with the Cabinet Makers, who have explained the nature of the grievances. The Committee approve of their principles, considering them founded in justice, and recommend that the Convention sanction their strike.

It was then unanimously resolved, that the contemplated strike of the Cabinet Makers, to establish their

New Book of Prices, be sanctioned by this Convention, and that the Committee of Conference be continued to act with a committee from the Cabinet Makers during said strike.

The Finance Committee read the proceeding of their meetings during the past month, showing the receipts and expenditures, from last report, and the Treasurer his account of receipts and disbursements, all of which were on motion approved.

The Corresponding Secretary then submitted the following communications. 1st. A communication from the Curriers' Society, which instructs their delegates to use their influence to procure the resignation of Mr. Ely Moore, as President of the Union, it being the opinion of the Society, that he has deserted the cause of the Mechanics and Working-men. 2d. A communication from the Stone Cutters, containing a series of resolutions, objecting to the Commissioners' report on the State Prison Economy, and urging the resignation of Mr. Moore, as President of the Union, and also a resolution adopted at a subsequent meeting of their Society relative to regulating their list of Prices. 3d. The communication from Mr. Cameron was then in order, which contained an exposition of his conduct, and the cause which led to his removal as a delegate.

After some few remarks it was proposed that Mr. Cameron have permission to withdraw his communication, when after a warm discussion it was decided by a rising vote, that Mr. Cameron be permitted to withdraw his communication. Mr. Bowie then called up the communication from the Curriers, and after entering largely upon its merits, wished that it might be laid on the table till next meeting. The communication from the Stone Cutters was then in order for acceptance or rejection, to decide which, led to an animated dis-

cussion, which was abundantly spiced with personal remarks, &c. On taking up the question the document was divided—that part relating to the State Prison being the first part, and that relative to trade the second part. The question on accepting the first part was then taken by a rising vote and lost; the second part was unanimously accepted.

The amendments to the Constitution and By Laws, as proposed at last meeting, were called up for consideration, when it was resolved that they be referred to a special committee to consist of five, who are to report at next meeting. The following persons were appointed said committee by open nomination, viz: O. Bingham, B. S. Gillespie, Jeremiah Clark, Jacob Low, and Jas. B. Anderson.

A communication was then presented from the "Leather Dressers' Society," on the subject of their returns of members and their dues, there being a difference of opinion between them and the Finance Committee on the subject, and they wished some action of the Convention on the affair. Whereupon it was resolved that a special committee of five be appointed to meet the Finance Committee and investigate the subject. The following persons were appointed said committee by open nomination, viz: Wm. Masterton, S. B. N. Scott, J. Commerford, J. B. Anderson, and H. M. Jackson.

National Trades' Union, May 2, 1835, p. 2, col. 1, 2. Special meeting.

[April 24] . . . The Secretary then read the call of the meeting, being a request from the Delegates of the Stone-cutters' Society. The call of the meeting was on motion approved, and the Delegates from the Stone-cutters were called upon to state the nature of their grievances. Whereupon, Mr. Gallagher arose, and stated that the object of their Society is, to establish a

Bill of Prices, for such of their members as work at piece-work, that will be equal in amount to the wages of those who work by the day. They have at present no regular scale of prices for piece-work: as it is now, the employers give such prices for the work done, as they please; some will give one price, and some another, which will differ materially with the journeymen at the end of the week, in the amount of wages. The object of the Society is therefore to regulate and establish a List of Prices, which will give to those who work at piece-work an equal compensation with those who work at day's-work.

After a few remarks on the subject, it was resolved, that a Committee of seven be appointed to confer with the Stone-cutters on the subject of their grievances, and the remedy to be applied to obtain relief. The following persons were appointed said Committee—viz: Thomas McDonald, John H. Bowie, Samuel B. N. Scott, Andrew E. Turnbull, Jacob Lowe, Matthias F. Spencer, and William Murphy.

Having now gone through with the business for which the meeting was called, the Delegates from the Cabinet-makers were requested to state the progress they have made towards establishing their New Book of Prices. They stated, that nearly all the employers have conformed to their wishes, but there are a few who hold out against the Journeymen. They also stated, that the Journeymen Cabinet-makers are grateful to the House-carpenters for their generous conduct in assisting to procure employment for the Cabinet-makers at their business, by which a large number were immediately employed; also to the Ship-joiners and to the Piano-Forte-makers, who assisted them to procure employment at their respective branches, and otherwise encouraged them in their strike.

It was then on motion – resolved, that the Corresponding Secretary return the thanks of this Union (through the public press) to the before-mentioned Trades for their generous conduct manifested towards the Cabinet-makers, under their existing difficulties. . . .

[April 29] . . . A communication from the Typographical Association, was then read, which stated the appointment of Charles A. Davis, as a delegate in the place of Alexander H. Hayes, resigned. Also a communication from the “Journeyman Locksmiths,” stating the appointment of James Quin, Abram H. Green, and Levi D. Slamm, as their delegates for the ensuing year. The credentials were approved, and the delegates were invited to take their seats in the Convention.

The committee appointed to draw up resolutions on State Prison Monopolies, and the Commissioner’s Report, having been called upon, stated they were not ready to report at this meeting. The committee appointed to confer with the Cabinet Makers, reported favorably. The committee appointed to confer with the Stone Cutters, reported that they have attended to the business assigned them, and from an investigation of the affair, they consider their demands reasonable and just, and do recommend that the convention sanction their contemplated strike. The report was on motion approved. . . .

The Corr. Sect’y read a number of communications which were disposed of as follows, viz: A communication from the Sup’t of the “Society for the Promotion of Knowledge and Industry,” with proposals to establish a House of Call, for the benefit of the Union, was referred to a committee of three, Messrs. Bowie, Slamm, and Lowe. A communication from the Cordwainers (ladies branch,) ordered that the Corr. Sec’y. answer the same. A communication from the Typographical

Association, on the subject of procuring a "Trades' Union Hall," was referred to a committee of three, Messrs. Insley, Murphy, and Anderson. A communication from the Typographical Association on the subject of a General Certificate of Membership, referred to a committee of three, Messrs. Davis, Green, and Gallagher. A communication from the Corr. Secty. of the Trades' Union at Washington relating to the number of hours constituting a day's labor. The Corr. Secty. was instructed to answer the same. The resignation of Messrs. Howard and Commerford as members of the supervising committee being laid over at the last monthly meeting, was brought forward and accepted: and it was resolved that said committee be dispensed with.

A communication having been read at a previous meeting from the Corr. Secty. of the Trades' Union at Albany, informing us of its formation, &c. It was proposed, and on motion adopted—that our Corr. Secty. answer the same, and that a committee of three be appointed to draft a resolution to be forwarded to Albany. The committee was composed of Messrs. Commerford, Slamm, and Gallagher, who retired a few moments and presented the following, which was on motion approved. "Resolved, that this convention view with pride, the successful efforts of our fellow mechanics of Albany, and its vicinity, to establish a Trades' Union Association, and congratulate them on the apparent unanimity existing among them." . . .

It was then resolved, that the societies at Poughkeepsie be requested to send their delegates to the convention, monthly, instead of quarterly, as formerly, during such part of the year as the communication will permit. The delegates from the House Carpenters stated, that there was some difficulty existing in their

financial concerns with the convention, and presented a certificate of their members with the amount they have paid, &c. The Finance committee were instructed to make a settlement agreeable to said certificate. . .

National Trades' Union, May 23, 1835, p. 2, col. 3, 4. Special meeting.

[May 20] . . . The Secretary read the call of the meeting, being a written request from the Cordwainers' Society, (ladies' branch.) The call of the meeting was on motion approved, and the Delegates from the Cordwainers were called upon to state the nature of their grievances. They stated, that their Society have concluded upon a strike for an advance of wages—considering the present prices inadequate to support their families, owing to the continued increase of expenses they are subject to. They wish the sanction of this Convention, considering that it would be of importance to them; and what makes them more anxious at present is, the trade in Newark are in difficulties with their employers. It was resolved, that a Committee of seven be appointed to confer with a Committee from the Cordwainers. The following persons were appointed by open nomination on said Committee, viz: J. H. Bowie, A. H. Green, A. E. Turnbull, W. Murphy, A. Keane, J. Commerford, and H. M. Jackson—who withdrew to meet the Cordwainers' Committee.

Notice being given, that a Delegation from the Trades' Union of Newark was in the house, they were invited forward, and presented their credentials, which were on motion approved. The Delegation consisted of Messrs. Schenck and Manahan, who informed the Convention of "the signs of the times," by stating, that the "Ladies' Shoe and Pump-makers' Society of Newark" did, about a month ago, strike for an advance of 12 per cent. on their wages, in order to enable them to support their families. They have made the same

known to the public who are nearly unanimously in favor with them, in the course they have taken; and even the Employers are not so much against the advance of wages, as they are against the formation of a "Trades' Union" among the Journeymen—which they are determined to oppose with their united influence. The Delegation wish an expression of the sentiments of this Convention in their case. Whereupon, it was resolved, that a Committee of three be appointed, to draft resolutions expressive of our sentiments respecting their present struggle. Messrs. Bingham, Anderson, and Bowie, were appointed said Committee, and they retired to accomplish said object.

The Committee appointed to confer with the Cordwainers, having returned, reported as follows: "The Committee appointed to confer with the Committee from the Ladies' Cordwainers' Society, respectfully report, that having investigated the nature of their grievances, are satisfied of the justice of soliciting this convention to sanction their strike, we believe that in aiding them, by approving of an effort on their part to advance their wages to a living standard, we shall be rendering them that support which should always be rendered when the demands of any trade are founded on apparent justice. Considering this to be fully the condition of the Ladies' Cordwainers' strike your Committee would respectfully recommend the concurrence of this Convention to sustain them." The report was adopted, and said Committee continued to confer with the Cordwainers during their strike.

The Committee, on resolution, having returned, reported the following, which were approved, and ordered to be published, also an authenticated copy to be forwarded to the Trades' Union of Newark: "Whereas, information having been received by the Conven-

tion of the General Trades' Union of New York and its vicinity, that the Cordwainers of Newark, N.J., have struck for what they believe to be a fair remuneration for their labor, and that the other mechanics have expressed their approval of this strike—and understanding that the Employers have threatened to discharge all those who belong to various Societies, or to the Union, now therefore resolved, that the Trades' Union of the city of New York recognize the justice of the recent proceedings of the Newark Trades' Union, in relation to the strike referred to in the above preamble—and hereby pledges itself to use every honorable means to render the same effective."

The Stone-cutters delegates being called upon for information in their case, reported that they are still in the field, their members however are in good spirits, being conscious of the justice of their demands, they also detailed an account of an attempt by some of the employers to effect a division among them thereby expecting to cause them to yield from the position they have taken: the plot however, was discovered in time to frustrate their designs. The following persons were appointed a committee of conference with the Stone-cutters with powers, viz: C. A. Davis, J. Commerford, L. D. Slamm, B. S. Gillespie and D. Rose.

The Corresponding Secretary, reported a letter received from Poughkeepsie, but in consequence of the delegates being absent no action was taken on the subject.

National Trades' Union, May 30, 1835, p. 2, col. 2, 3.

[May 27] . . . Communications were received from the Cordwainers of Poughkeepsie, stating the appointment of Stephen R. Harris and James Gable, as Delegates to the "General Trades' Union."

The Committee appointed at a former meeting on

State Prison Monopolies and the Commissioners' report, made a few remarks on the subject, and then wished to be discharged from further services. Their request was on motion granted, and the Committee discharged. The Committee on revising the Constitution, presented their report, which was accepted, and laid on the table. The Committee on the subject of a House of Call, reported favorably to the proposals of the "Society for the Promotion of Knowledge and Industry." The Committee on a General Certificate, reported progress. The Committee on a Trades' Union Hall, not being prepared with a report, a separate report from one of the Committee was read, and was on motion referred back to the Committee.

The Finance Committee then read the minutes of their proceedings, which were approved; and the Treasurer presented his report, which was accepted.

The Corresponding Secretary made his report, by reading the following communications—viz: 1. From the Cordwainers of Poughkeepsie, on the subject of an advance in their prices. A Committee of five was then appointed to investigate the affair, consisting of Messrs. J. Commerford, O. Bingham, J. Short, L. D. Slamm, and A. Howard, who retired, in conference with a Committee from Poughkeepsie. 2. From the House-Carpenters' Society, on the subject of our receipts and disbursements, wishing particular information on the expenses attending the publication of Mr. Moore's Address. The whole was referred to a Special Committee of seven, who were appointed by open nomination, as follows—viz: H. M. Jackson, J. Commerford, C. S. Wright, A. Green, H. Gallagher, A. E. Turnbull, and A. Howard. 3. From the Corresponding Secretary of the Trades' Union of Albany, giving information of a contemplated celebration, with an invitation to Mr.

Moore and the Delegates to attend the same; also a request for the loan of our Grand Standard, to be used on the occasion. The invitation was accepted, and permission was granted to the Finance Committee to loan the Banner. It having been stated that the Banner was at present unfit for use, a communication from Mr. Liebenau on that subject was then read, which elicited some remarks from Mr. Scott, by way of explanation. The communication was then about to be referred to a Committee; but previous to taking the question, it was resolved, that Mr. Liebenau have permission to withdraw his communication. The Finance Committee was then instructed to have the Banner put in proper order for use.

The Committee of Conference with the Cordwainers of Poughkeepsie having reported favorably in their case, it was resolved, that this Convention approve of the contemplated strike of the Cordwainers of Poughkeepsie, and sanction the same; and that the Committee of Conference be continued with powers. It was then resolved, that the monthly dues of the Cordwainers (ladies' branch) for the past month be remitted.

The Stone-cutters reported, that they have not yet come to terms with their employers, and do not know when they shall; the men, however, are still determined to maintain the position they have assumed.

The Chairman then stated, that a circumstance recently occurred, which was calculated to reflect no very great credit on the persons engaged therein; and it might be supposed by some who are unacquainted with the matter, that the General Trades' Union was a party concerned in the affair. He had reference to the strike of the Journeymen Horse-shoers; and after a few remarks, it was considered necessary to disclaim our con-

nexion with said Society. The following resolution was presented, and the Corresponding Secretary was instructed to make it the subject of a communication to the public: Whereas, a notice having appeared in several of the papers of this city, purporting to have emanated from the Journeymen Horse-Shoers' Trades' Union Society, relative to an increase of wages; and whereas, the said Society not being a member of this Union, and while on their strike, not acting with that propriety becoming good citizens—therefore resolved, that we disclaim all connexion with the above-mentioned Society, as they have never conformed to the rules and regulations by which the Trades' Union is governed. . .

National Trades' Union, June 13, 1835, p. 2, col. 4.

[June 10] . . . A communication from the Leather-dressers was then read, stating the appointment of Jonathan Barnes as a delegate, in the place of John Priestly, resigned. The credentials were approved, and Mr. Barnes was invited to take his seat in the Convention.

The Stone-cutters' delegates were then called upon for a report. They stated that they have concluded their strike, having received from the employers all that they wished for. It was then resolved, that a vote of thanks be presented to the Stone-cutters, for their firmness in sustaining their just rights; and also, resolved, that their monthly dues be remitted.

A member of the Cordwainers of Newark being present, was requested to inform us of the progress they have made towards accomplishing their object. He stated, that they have succeeded to their utmost satisfaction, the Employers having granted all that the Journeymen asked; he also stated the course they adopted, and pursued during their strike. A vote of congratulation was

then passed in favor of the Cordwainers of Newark, for the success that has crowned their efforts in attempting to better their condition.

The corresponding Secretary then read a letter from the Cordwainers of Poughkeepsie, stating the fact of their strike, and the prospects of success they have before them; and that the Employers are not so much opposed to the advance of wages asked, as they are to the existence of a Society among the Journeymen. Also, a letter from the Corresponding Secretary of the Trades' Union of Albany, giving us notice of a postponement of their procession, &c. and their thanks for the loan of our banner, the use of which was granted to them at our last meeting. The President having resigned the chair to the Vice President, it was on motion resolved, that a Committee of three be appointed to proceed to Poughkeepsie, to assist and encourage the Cordwainers in their present struggle to sustain their rights. The following persons were appointed by open nomination—viz: John Commerford, Oramel Bingham, and David Scott.

The delegates from the Cordwainers (ladies' branch) being called upon to make a report, stated, that they have concluded their strike, and that the men are all in employment. A vote of thanks was then presented to the Cordwainers, for their manly conduct during their strike; also a vote of thanks to the Cabinet-makers, and a vote to remit their monthly dues during the time they were on a strike.

The amendments to the Constitution and By-Laws being now in order, were taken up for consideration. Article 2, as proposed to be amended, was then read. A lengthy discussion ensued, during which several additional amendments were proposed; but the hour for adjournment having arrived, no question was taken thereon.

The Man, June 29, 1835, p. 2, 3. Also in *National Trades' Union*, June 27, 1835, p. 2.

. . . The following communications were then read, viz.: A communication from the "Carpenters of Poughkeepsie," stating the appointment of William Wadsworth, Henry Titeman, and Joseph K. Phelps as their delegates to the "General Trades' Union."

A communication from the "Cordwainers" (men's branch) appointing Richard Howkins as a delegate in the place of Jeremiah W. Clark, resigned. Also, a communication from the "Cabinet Makers" appointing James D. Meeker, as a delegate in place of Thomas McDonald, resigned. The credentials were approved, and the delegates were on motion invited to take their seats in the Convention. The "Staten Island Independent Journeymen House Carpenters" having appointed delegates to the Convention, Mr. John Hayt and Thomas Houston presented themselves as such without their credentials, they being in the possession of an absent person. The fact of the appointment being established by evidence, they were invited to take their seats in the Convention. The President having arrived in the room, the Vice President resigned the chair.

The Committee on a "Trades' Union Hall" being called upon for a report, stated the chairman of said committee was absent, and they were unable to report. The committee on a general certificate, reported favorably to the object, and recommended the appointment of a committee to procure a suitable design, and ascertain the probable expenses that would be incurred. The report was on motion accepted. The committee to whom was referred the resolutions from the Carpenters, on the Financial concerns of the Convention, being called upon, the Chairman stated he had not been able to get a sufficient number of the Committee together to do any business. The Committee was on motion

discharged. The Committee appointed to visit the Poughkeepsie Cordwainers, reported that they attended to their duty as directed; they found them still on the strike. A general meeting of the Mechanics was held, in which they all expressed themselves favorable to the principles adopted by the Cordwainers. The Committee urged the necessity of sustaining them. Their delegates reported that the Employers continue opposed to the measures of the Journeymen, and the Journeymen are still firm in their determination to sustain their rights. Several propositions were made for their relief, all of which were referred to the committee of conference, with powers. . . .

The amendments to the Constitution were then taken up for consideration. The first article, relative to representation according to numbers, was read, and a lengthy discussion ensued, which resulted in the adoption of a motion to lay the subject on the table.

Mr. D. Scott, from the Tailors, stated that there was a movement among their society for the purpose of forming a bill of prices, as they have none at present; and they wish the sanction of the Convention to sustain them, in case they cannot come to any reasonable compromise. It was resolved, that a Committee of seven be appointed to confer with them on the subject; Messrs. Gallagher, Short, Green, Howard, Bennett, Spencer, and Brown were appointed said committee by open nomination.

The Leather-Dressers stated that some of their members were in difficulty, by an attempt made to reduce their wages—and wished the Convention to take some order on the subject. A committee of three was appointed to investigate the matter—viz: Messrs. Bowie, Sharp, and Curley.

Mr. Scott, Chairman of the Finance Committee,

called the attention of the Convention to the importance of attending to such Societies as are in arrears for dues, and suggested the propriety of taking some pains to collect the same, &c. A committee of one was proposed, and amended, by adding two more. Said committee—consisting of Messrs. D. Scott, H. Gallagher, and B. S. Gillespie, were appointed by open nomination. Mr. Bennett, from the Carpenters, called for the reading of a resolution received from their Society at our last meeting. The resolution was then read and the subject of Finances and Expenditures was again agitated. After considerable time was taken up in discussing the subject, the resolution from the Carpenters was referred to the Finance Committee.

Mr. Jackson then proposed that a resolution be adopted to censure such members of committees who neglect to attend to the duties to which they are appointed. He was instructed to prepare a by-law on the subject, and present the same at our next meeting.

The Stone Cutters' Delegates wished to know if the Convention intended to celebrate their second anniversary by a procession, &c. It was then proposed that the anniversary celebration be dispensed with. After some discussion the motion was withdrawn, but was immediately renewed by another member. The further consideration of the subject was proposed to be laid on the table—and that was also withdrawn, to give place for the original motion, which on taking the question was lost. It was then resolved, that we celebrate our second anniversary by a procession, &c. It was then resolved, that a Committee of arrangements, to consist of seven, be appointed to procure a person to deliver an address on the occasion, &c. The following persons were appointed by open nomination: Messrs. Bingham, Com-

merford, Green, Gallagher, Gillespie, D. Scott, and R. Sharp. . .

The Man, July 6, 1835, p. 2, col. 2. Also in *National Trades' Union*, July 4, 1835, p. 2.

[July 1] . . . A communication from the Curriers' Society, stating that they had re-elected John H. Bowie, James Potter, and elected Noah H. Cram, as delegates for the ensuing year. The credentials were approved and the delegates invited to take their seats. A communication was also received from the Associated Hand Loom Weavers of N.Y. and vicinity, stating that they had organized a society, consisting of 197 members, and appointed Joseph Thompson, John Johnson, and Joseph Paterson as delegates to the Convention. A motion to accept their credentials was carried, and the delegates took their seats in the Convention.

The committee of conference with the Tailors, reported favorably, and presented their bill of prices; which report was approved. The committee appointed to confer with the Leather Dressers, reported that there were four men working below the regular price. They have struck; and the committee are satisfied that they will procure the prices. The report was approved, and the strike sanctioned.

The committee of arrangements for celebrating the second anniversary, reported B. S. Gillespie as Orator of the day, and recommended the invitation of the Albany and Newark Trades' Unions to join them on that occasion. The report so far as related to the Orator was rejected. It was proposed that an election for Orator should then take place, the person elected to receive the majority of the votes, and the selection to be restricted to the members of the Union. Messrs. Commerford and Bowie were nominated in open meeting. The following gentlemen were elected inspectors of election

by open nomination: L. D. Slamm, O. Bingham, and Jacob Lowe. Upon sorting and counting the votes, Mr. John Commerford was declared duly elected. Mr. Commerford then rose and stated, that he being of the committee which recommended Mr. Gillespie, he did not wish to accept the appointment until he could consult Mr. G. on the subject. The Convention, however, were urgent to know whether Mr. C. would serve or not, and objected to all delay, whereupon he signified his acceptance of the appointment.

A communication was handed in by Mr. Bingham, from the Poughkeepsie Cordwainers, returning a bad \$5 bill; which was, on motion of Mr. Short, ordered to be refunded, and the bill returned to the Treasurer.

Mr. Jackson reported a By-Law to affect delinquent committeemen. A proposition to lay it on the table till next meeting was lost. The By-Law was then adopted. . . .

National Trades' Union, Aug. 1, 1835, p. 3, col. 1, 2. Special meeting.

[July 27] . . . A communication from the House Wrights of Boston, was read, informing us of the appointment of a Delegation from that body, to this Convention, said delegation consisting of Messrs. Seth Luther, Thomas E. Osgood, and Samuel Virgin; their credentials being, on motion, accepted, a committee consisting of Messrs. Commerford, Davis and Quinn, was appointed to invite them up in the room.

A communication was received from the Journeymen Cordwainers of New Brunswick, stating the appointment of A. W. Mayo, J. C. Pullis, and Wm. Robinson, as their delegates to the General Trades' Union for the ensuing year; their credentials were, on motion, approved, and they invited to take their seats in the convention.

The delegates from Boston were then introduced, and

Mr. Luther addressed the convention on the subject of their mission, in which he detailed the particulars of the present difficulties, existing among the Carpenters of Boston, in consequence of their adopting the system, which recognizes Ten Hours labour as a day's work; and solicited the co-operation and assistance of the Mechanics of N. York, to accomplish their object. The delegation had visited Newark and Paterson in N.J., and the Trades' Union of Newark, held a special meeting, at which they adopted Resolutions in favour of the stand taken by the House Wrights of Boston; they also appointed a committee of one to proceed with the Boston delegates to Philadelphia, provided the New York Union appointed a similar committee. Whereupon it was resolved, that a committee of three, be appointed to retire and prepare resolutions, expressing our sentiments in the case of the House Wrights of Boston; Messrs. Slamm, Commerford and Gallagher, were appointed said committee, who withdrew to prepare said resolutions.

The Committee having returned, presented the following Preamble and Resolutions, which were accepted, and previous to adopting them, the delegation from Boston left the room. Whereas, the Mechanics of Boston have determined upon introducing in that place, the Ten Hour system of labor, and believing that they have the right to sell their labor in such quantities and at such prices as may to them appear necessary to their health and morals, and the adequate support of their families, therefore, be it resolved, that this Convention highly approve of the decided stand our fellow mechanics of Boston have taken, relative to a revolution in their system of labor—believing and knowing it to be founded on justice and the rights of man. Resolved, that while

we indignantly deprecate the cause which has forced them to strike, viz.—the hostile efforts of their aristocratic employers, to keep them in a state of vassalage—but little better than that of the serfs of Russia—we will use our united exertions to sustain them in so good and glorious a cause. Resolved, that in furtherance of the above object, (should the case demand it) we will call upon the different societies which are members of the Trades' Union, to aid them with money sufficient to furnish the work they have so gloriously commenced. Resolved, that a committee of —— be appointed to proceed with the Boston delegation, and that the expenses of said Committee be defrayed by this convention.

L. D. SLAMM, J. COMMERFORD, H. GALLAGHER
[Committee].

The Resolutions were then adopted, and the blank No. of the committee to accompany the delegates, was filled with one—that he be paid \$1.50 per day, besides travelling expences. It was then resolved, that we proceed to elect said committee by ballot; Messrs. Commerford, Gallagher, D. Scott and Gillespie, were nominated as candidates, and Gillespie, Brown and Davis, appointed inspectors of the Election; who, on counting the votes declared that Mr. John Commerford was duly elected. The following Resolutions was then offered, and on motion adopted, viz: resolved, that this convention recommend to the delegates attached to the Union, the propriety of urging upon their respective Societies, the necessity of coming forward at this time, to sustain the manly efforts of the Journeymen House Wrights of Boston, to obtain those rights, which will enable them to partake in the benefits so generally extended to those who have demanded the Ten Hour System—elsewhere. . . .

Some misunderstanding of the case existing in the minds of a few of the members of the Convention, it was proposed that the Boston delegation be recalled to make some further explanations; this however, was opposed, on the presumption that enough had been already said, to give every member of the Convention all the information that was necessary [Part of the record is missing.] to answer every question that might be put to them. After a lengthy discussion the question was taken and decided in the negative. A committee of conference was then appointed by open nomination to receive the delegation on their return to the city. Messrs. Gallagher, Bennett, S. B. N. Scott, Slamm, Jackson, Bingham and Brown, were appointed said committee. The Boston Delegation were then invited up in the room, and heard a report of the proceedings of the meeting. They expressed themselves very grateful for the interest manifested in their welfare, and declared that they would return us the same favours, whenever it might be in their power. . . .

[July 29] . . . A Communication from the Book-Binders Association was then read, which stated the appointment of James McBeath, John B. Parks, and Thomas Trotter, as their delegates for the ensuing year. The credentials were approved, and the delegates were on motion invited to take their seats in the Convention. Credentials from the "N.Y. Weavers' Society" were then read stating the appointment of two persons as delegates from that body to the Trades' Union; but there being delegates already in the convention, from the associated Hand Loom Weavers of N.Y. who are of the same trade or art, a question arose on the propriety of receiving two sets of delegates from persons whose interests are the same. It was resolved that the subject be referred to a committee of five for investigation; said

committee consisted of Messrs. Jackson, Slamm, Gillespie, Bingham and Davis.

The Committee of Arrangements for our Anniversary being called upon, stated they were not prepared with any report, and they were unable to proceed until the day was specified for holding the celebration. When it was on motion, resolved, that, as the 28th of August was the day on which the Union was organized, it be the day on which the celebration shall take place. The Finance Committee and the Treasurer, then presented their reports, which were on motion accepted.

A Letter from the Poughkeepsie Cordwainers was then read, the subject of which was referred to the Conference Committee with powers. Mr. Scott from the Pamphlet Committee reported his proceedings, which report was on motion accepted, and referred to the Finance Committee.

The delegates from the Leather Dressers reported a stand against a reduction of wages, which was sanctioned by the Society, and they wished the Convention to take some order on the subject. Whereupon it was resolved, that this Convention highly approve of the course adopted by the Leather Dressers to sustain their just rights.

Mr. D. Scott then stated that an advertisement appeared in the *National Trades Union* for 150 Journeymen Stone Cutters, which was calculated to do injury to the Journeymen Stone Cutters already here, by enticing a surplus of men to the city; while the advertisers only wanted a few men to work at State Prison Stone, which is contrary to the rules of the Trade. A Committee of three was appointed to wait on the Editors of the *Trades' Union* for an explanation of the matter.

Messrs. Slamm, Gallagher and Murphy were appointed said Committee, who withdrew to make inquiry of the Editors immediately.

Mr. Bingham from the Cordwainers (ladies' branch) stated that his society wished the Convention to remit their monthly dues for the two past months, in consequence of the heavy expenses attending on their recent strike. It was on motion resolved, that said dues be remitted.

The Committee having returned, stated that they have had interview with the Editors, who informed them, that they were not aware of its injurious effect; and if it is injurious to the Journeymen Stone Cutters, it should be discontinued, and an explanation of the affair published. It was resolved, that the Editors publish a disclaimer and an explanation of the affair. . . .

National Trades' Union, Aug. 15, 1835, p. 3, col. 1, 2.

[August 12] . . . Credentials were received from the United Trade, and Benevolent Society of Journeymen Tailors, appointing David Scott, Saml. B. N. Scott, and James Kneringer, as their delegates for the ensuing year; from the "Curriers" appointing John Fell as a delegate in the place of N. H. Crane, resigned; and from the Tailors of Brooklyn appointing Richard Sharp, Richard Carpenter, and William B. Bliss, as their delegates for the ensuing year. The Credentials were approved, and the delegates were on motion invited to take their seats in the Convention.

Mr. John Commerford, the delegate appointed to proceed with the Boston delegation to Philadelphia, reported that on their arrival they were met by a Committee from the Philadelphia Trades Union, who escorted them to their lodgings, and that a special meeting of the Union was called the same evening, to which they were introduced by a Committee appointed for

the purpose; there was also a General Meeting of the Members of the Union called on Saturday in Independence Square, where a large number assembled, and after being addressed by some of the members adopted a number of spirited resolutions in favor of the Bostonians; he also stated his own views of the subject, and urged the necessity of supporting the House Wrights of Boston in their present struggle. Notice was there given, that delegates from Phil. Paterson and Albany, and also the Boston delegation who had returned to the City were in attendance. It was resolved that a Committee of three be appointed to invite them up in the room. Messrs. Quinn, Commerford, and Davis composed said Committee, who withdrew for that purpose.

While the Committee were out, credentials from the Union Trade Society of Journeymen Tailors were read, appointing Jonathan Delong, Henry Falkner, and William Livingston, as their delegates to the Trades' Union. There being a constitutional objection to receiving two sets of delegates from the one Trade or Art, the subject was referred to a Committee of five, viz: Messrs. Bingham, Gallagher, Patterson, Slamm, and Sharp, who were to report at next meeting.

The Committee having returned with the foreign delegates, Mr. Luther stated the success they have met with during their absence, and expressed their hearty thanks for the encouragement they have met with both here and elsewhere. He was followed by the delegate from Philadelphia, who urged the importance of union among the working classes, in order to protect themselves against oppression, and particularly urged the necessity of encouraging, and fostering the interests of those working men called labourers, whose interests have heretofore been neglected by the mechanics. The delegate from Paterson stated, that it was not intended

that he should occupy the meeting with many remarks, in the place of which he would refer the attention of the convention to a statement of facts, published in the *Paterson Courier*; being the report of a committee of two respectable individuals who are entirely disinterested in the subject, to whom a series of questions were proposed relative to the present struggle of those employed in the Factories, in endeavoring to obtain a reduction in the hours of labour. Mr. Scott read said report, and also stated his own observations while visiting Paterson, of the tyranny and oppression exercised over the unfortunate females and children, who are connected with the manufactories. It seems that at the time of the strike, there were three weeks wages due, the payment of which was refused unless they would give a receipt in full on receiving the amount of two weeks wages. Some were driven by sheer necessity to agree to this plan of their villanous employers to rob them, and received their pay; but there are now two cases pending in a Court of Law to test the validity of those receipts, he also stated other incidents which tends to prove that the town of Paterson offers a large field for labour to the philanthropist.

The delegate from Albany, stated the progress of their Union, which was very encouraging; he also felt happy in hearing such flattering accounts from different parts of the country, of the success attending the union of the working classes.

After the different delegates had expressed their sentiments before the convention, they withdrew, and the Committee of arrangement for the anniversary, were called upon for a report. The chairman stated that they had not done much since last report; they have made application for Delancy St. Church, and have no doubt but it can be procured, although they will not get a definite

answer 'til to-morrow evening. Mr. Commerford, having been appointed Orator, declined being a member of the Committee of arrangements, and Mr. Jacob Lowe was appointed in his place. Mr. Asa Howard, from the Society of Cabinet Makers, was, on motion, appointed Grand Marshal of the day, with power to appoint his aids. It was then resolved, that the Grand Marshal be added to the Committee of arrangements. Mr. Jacob Lowe was then appointed Marshal for the Convention.

The Committee appointed to investigate the affair of the New York Weavers' Society, presented a written report of their proceedings, by which it was ascertained that they were two societies of the same Trade or Art; and that their interests were inseparably connected. The Committee referred the subject to the Convention for its decision. The report was accepted; but previous to taking order on the subject, the chairman vacated the chair in favor of Mr. Gillespie; a discussion of the subject ensued, in which it appeared that an article of the constitution prohibited the acceptance of two sets of delegates from any one Trade whose interests are so intimately connected. It was on motion resolved, that they have the privilege of withdrawing their credentials. . .

A Communication from the President of the Trades' Union of Philadelphia, was then read, which introduced a delegation from the Journeymen Saddlers of Philadelphia, who informed us of the difficulties existing among them and their employers in consequence of a strike for an advance of wages, and wishing the sentiments of the convention on the subject. The Communication was accepted, and the following resolution was on motion adopted: resolved, that this Convention approve of the determined stand of the Journeymen Saddlers of Philadelphia in endeavoring to advance their

wages to a living standard; the opposition manifested by their aristocratical employers to the contrary notwithstanding. . .

National Trades' Union, Aug. 22, 1835, p. 3, col. 1.

[August 19] . . . Credentials were received from the "New York Journeymen Glass Cutter's Society" appointing Howard Hill, John Camblen and John Primrose, as their delegates to the General Trades Union; from the Society of Journeymen Cabinet Makers, appointing B. S. Gillespie, Wm. Smith and Timothy Daly, as their delegates for the ensuing year; and from the N.Y. Union Society of Journeymen House Carpenters, appointing Barnes Bennett, Isaac Odell and Wm. N. Marsden, as their delegates for the ensuing year. The credentials were approved, and the delegates were, on motion, invited to take their seats in the Convention.

The committee of arrangements, being called upon, reported the hour for forming the line and the route of march. Also, the terms on which they can procure the Church, and a band of music, &c. The report was on motion approved, and the Committee were instructed to invite the Trades' Union of Albany, Newark and Schenectady to unite with us in the celebration. It was then resolved, that we draw lots for stations in the line, which resulted as follows: 1, Hat Makers. 2, Tailors. 3, Cabinet Makers. 4, Book Binders. 5, Stone Cutters. 6, Cordwainers (men's.) 7, Glass Cutters. 8, Leather Dressers. 9, Associated Weavers. 10, Sail Makers. 11, Brush Makers. 12, Cordwainers (ladies'.) 13, Lock Smiths. 14, Printers. 15, Curriers. 16, House Carpenters. 17, Tailors of Brooklyn. 18, Chair Makers. The delegates from the Cordwainers then stated, that an agreement existed between their Societies for them to walk together in the line; therefore, No. 6, would fall back, and form on the right of No. 12, in doing

which they would not infringe on the rights of any other society. After which, it was resolved, that our arrangements be published in four of the daily papers, and that it be inserted twice in each paper, and also be published in such other papers as will publish the same gratuitously.

The Committee appointed at last meeting to investigate the case of the Union Trade Society of Tailors, being called upon for a report, the chairman stated, that he had called a meeting of the Committee, at which there was not a quorum present, and he declined acting any further on the subject; he proposed that the committee be discharged, and another committee was appointed, which consisted of Messrs. Slamm, Gillespie, Short, Murphy and Trotter, who are to report at the next meeting.

It was then resolved that the Convention meet on Friday, August 28th inst. at 8 o'clock, a.m. for celebrating our second anniversary. . . .

National Trades' Union, Aug. 29, 1835, p. 2, col. 3.

[August 26] . . . Credentials were received from the Cordwainers' Society, (men's branch,) appointing John Short, Richard Howkins, and Lewis Judson—from the ladies' branch of the same trade, appointing David Kilmer, Edward McKeeby, and Amos Waring—from the Carpenters' Society of Poughkeepsie, appointing Samuel W. Hester and Thomas Remington—from the Cordwainers of Poughkeepsie, appointing Thomas Haight, James Cable, and Stephen R. Harris—from the Typographical Association, appointing Charles A. Davis, Hiram Tupper, and Herman D. Bristol, as Delegates for the ensuing year. The credentials were approved, and the delegates invited to take their seats.

The committee appointed at the last meeting to investigate the case of the Union Trade Society of Tailors,

made their report, which was accepted, and laid on the table. The Committee of Arrangements for the Celebration on Friday, (yesterday,) made a report in regard to music, &c. A letter from the Trades' Union of Newark, in reply to the committee's invitation, was also read, which stated their inability to join us in our celebration.

The regular business before the Convention being finished, a motion to proceed to the election of Officers for the ensuing year, was adopted. The President appointed Messrs. Haight, Bennett, and Short, inspectors of election—who, after canvassing the votes, declared the following persons duly elected: John Commerford, *president*, Barnabas S. Gillespie, *vice president*, Herman D. Bristol, *rec'g secretary*, Levi D. Slamm, *Corr'g secretary*, John Brown, *treasurer*, Edward McKeeby, Thomas Trotter, Hiram Tupper, Richard Sharp, William Murphy, and Jacob Low—*finance committee*.

The result of the election having been announced, Mr. Moore observed, that it was proper for him now to vacate the chair. A committee was thereupon appointed—consisting of Messrs. Slamm, Short, and Haight—to wait upon the President elect, and conduct him to the chair. On the approach of Mr. Commerford, the late President addressed him in his usual happy and eloquent tone, congratulating him on his accession to the responsible office of President of this Union. Mr. Moore, upon taking leave, as presiding officer of the Convention, made a neat acknowledgment for the many kindnesses which he had received at their hands—referred, in felicitous terms, to the inauspicious circumstances under which this Union (the first experiment in the country) had been formed—the almost insurmountable obstacles against which they had to contend—the misrepresentations and vile slanders of our enemies,

(the only weapons they had wielded against us); and concluded, by urging the friends of the Union to beware of their enemies in disguise, who endeavor to sow the seeds of discord among them; closing the figure by observing, that the lordly oak may withstand the winds and the tempests of heaven, but withers and dies by the gnawings of the worm at its core. Mr. Slamm offered the following resolution, which, on motion, was adopted: Resolved, that the thanks of the Convention be presented to Mr. Ely Moore, for the very able and impartial manner with which he has filled the office of President; and that he has our best wishes for his health and prosperity on his retirement from that chair which he has so satisfactorily occupied. It was then resolved, that the Corresponding Secretary be instructed to forward a copy of the above resolution to Mr. Moore, and also a similar one to the other officers who had retired from office.

Mr. Odell presented the following: resolved, that the Treasurer present, at the next monthly meeting, a full account of all moneys received and the amount of expenditures for the past year: also, the items for which the expenditures were made.

The report from the Committee on the Tailors' business was taken up and read again; when a discussion ensued on its adoption, and a motion prevailed to refer it back to the committee, and Messrs. Howkins and Parks were added to the Committee.

The Committee of Arrangements were instructed to procure badges for the Convention. . . .

National Trades' Union, Sept. 5, 1835, p. 2, col. 1.

The Convention met on Friday, Aug. 28, 1835, at 8 o'clock, a. m. for the purpose of celebrating the Second Anniversary. The weather appearing unpropitious for our celebration, much doubt existed in relation to the

course to be pursued; but at a subsequent hour appearances being more favorable, it was, on motion resolved, that the members of Societies present be requested to proceed to their respective Societies, and prepare for the celebration. It was then resolved, that the Marshal of the Convention be authorized to appoint standard bearers and supporters for the Grand Standard of the Union.

A committee of three was then appointed to wait on Mr. Moore, and the President and Vice President of the Trades' Union of Albany, and other delegates who were in the City, to invite them to unite with the Convention in celebrating the anniversary of the Trades' Union. Messrs. Murphy, Bennet and Brown were appointed said committee.

After returning from the procession the Convention met with the President in the chair, when a vote of thanks was tendered to the Grand Marshal and his aids for their services during the day. It was then on motion resolved, that a committee of three be appointed to wait on Mr. Ely Moore, and request a copy of his valedictory address before the Convention, and the committee were instructed to furnish a copy of said address to the editors of the *N.T. Union* for publication, and likewise to all other editors who are friendly to our interests. Messrs. McBeath, Slamm and Commerford, were appointed said Committee. . . .

National Trades' Union, Sept. 12, 1835, p. 2, col. 2.

[September 9] . . . Credentials were received from the Society of Hatters, appointing Matthias F. Spencer, John Curley, and George Eldrige, as their Delegates to the Trades' Union for the ensuing year. Credentials were also received from the Associated Weavers, announcing that Robert Foster and James Thompson had been elected Delegates, in the place of Joseph Thomp-

son and Joseph Patterson, resigned. On motion, the credentials were approved, and the Delegates above named were invited to take seats in the Convention.

The President then stated that the meeting had been called for the purpose of taking into consideration the strike of the Cordwainers at Poughkeepsie. After considerable desultory conversation, by the way of eliciting information on the matter, it was resolved, that a Committee be appointed to confer with the Cordwainers of Poughkeepsie. Messrs. B. S. Gillespie, Levi D. Slamm, and Amos Waring, were openly nominated, and appointed said Committee. The aforesaid Committee were instructed to proceed to Poughkeepsie, inquire fully into the situation and prospects of the Cordwainers, and report the same to the Convention.

On motion, resolved, that a Committee be appointed to procure a suitable room for the purpose of holding the session of the National Convention of Trades on the first of October next. Messrs. Commerford, Slamm, and Odell were appointed said Committee. . .

National Trades' Union, Oct. 3, 1835, p. 2, col. 3, 4.

[September 30] . . . Credentials were received from the Curriers, announcing that John B. Atwell had been elected a Delegate to the Convention, in the place of John Fell resigned. Credentials were also received from the Brush Makers, appointing Alfred Brewer a Delegate, in the place of Henry E. Insley resigned. Credentials were likewise received from the Rope Makers of Brooklyn, appointing John Denyse, Jabez Ross, and Lorenzo Cuddy, as their Delegates for the ensuing year. On motion, the Credentials were approved, and the above-named Delegates invited to take seats in the Convention.

The Corresponding Secretary then read a communication from the Albany Trades' Union, relative to the

late Anniversary Celebration. The Committee appointed to visit Poughkeepsie made a Report of their doings, in which they stated that the strike of the Cordwainers in that place had been concluded satisfactorily. Report adopted. Mr. Odell, from the Committee appointed to procure a room for the use of the National Convention on the 1st of October, stated, that application had been made to the Common Council for the use of a room, to which no definite reply had been made up to this evening. It appeared that one Board of the Common Council had referred this application to the Standing Committee on Lands and Places; but as the Committee of the Convention had heard of no answer to their request, they were thus left to conclude that a room had been denied them.

It having been stated, that several of the Delegates to the National Convention were now in the city, a resolution was adopted, appointing a Committee (consisting of Messrs. Bennett, Tupper, Hufty, and Waring) to invite them to take seats in this Convention. After the Delegates to the National Convention had been introduced, and after some conversation on the disappointment arising from the refusal of the Common Council to allow the use of a room for the proposed session, it was decided that the National Convention meet at 15 Park Row, to-morrow morning at nine o'clock.

Several highly interesting addresses were made by the Delegates from Philadelphia, Baltimore, Newark, Albany, &c. giving cheering accounts of the prospects of our fellow mechanics in those places, and furnishing proof of the increase and success of Trades' Union principles. . . .

The Finance Committee were not wholly prepared to make a full Report, embracing all the items; but read

the minutes of their various meetings, giving an account of the receipts and disbursements for the last month, which was accepted.

Mr. M'Keeby, gave notice that he should, at the next regular meeting, call up the proposed amendments to the Constitution and By-laws, which had been lying on the table for some time. . .

H. D. BRISTOL, Secretary.

National Trades' Union, Oct. 17, 1835, p. 2, col. 3. Special meeting.

[October 7] . . . After some discussion on the affairs of the Sail Makers, the following resolution was adopted. Resolved, that this Convention approve of the recent strike of the Sail Makers for an advance of wages and congratulate them on the happy result of their efforts. After some remarks from Mr. Odell and others, it was resolved, that a Committee of seven be appointed to consider the propriety of erecting a Trades' Union Hall, and report thereon. Messrs. Odell, McBeath, Gillespie, Gallagher, Hawkins, Tupper, and Spencer, were appointed. On motion, the President was added to the Committee.

The Report of the Committee on the affairs of the Tailors, being brought up, was, after some explanation by D. Scott, recommitted. Messrs. Hawkins and Murphy having declined serving any longer on this Committee, Messrs. Gallagher and Potter were elected to fill the vacancy.

Amendments to the Constitution of the General Trades' Union, to be brought up at their next regular meeting:

ARTICLE II. *Section 1.* The business of this Union shall be conducted by regularly appointed delegates from each Trade or Art; to be elected by, and belong to the body they represent and to hold office for one year.

Section 2. Any Society of forty members and under, shall be entitled to two delegates; over forty, and not over one hundred, to an additional delegate, and for every fifty over one hundred members, one delegate shall be added.

ARTICLE III. The officers of this Convention shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Recording and Corresponding Secretaries, a Treasurer and a Finance Committee, all of whom, except the Finance Committee, shall be elected annually by ballot.

ARTICLE V. *Section 1.* The Vice-President shall, in the absence of the President, preside at all meetings of the Convention, and shall perform all duties belonging to that office.

Section 2. He shall preside at all meetings of the Finance Committee, but shall not vote on any question, unless the Committee should be equally divided, in which case he shall have the casting vote. He shall also authenticate the accounts of the Finance Committee with his signature.

ARTICLE IX. *Section 1.* The Finance Committee shall consist of one member from each society, to be appointed or elected by such society from the number of its delegates, and no member of said committee shall be eligible to any other office under this Constitution.

Section 2. They shall each deliver to the Vice President of this Union at every stated meeting, the amount due from their respective societies, who shall authorise the Secretary of the Committee to give a receipt for the same, and then pay the amount received to the Treasurer, taking his receipt for the whole amount.

Section 3. They shall hold regular monthly meetings on the Wednesday evening preceding the stated meetings of the Convention, and shall present a written report of all their proceedings, at such stated meeting.

Section 4. When the funds amount to one hundred dollars, over and above the necessary expenses of the Union, they shall report to the Convention, and said Convention shall authorise at least three of the Committee to receive the amount from the Treasurer and deposit it at the direction of the Convention.

Section 5. The committee must also receive and take charge of all bonds or documents and all other property of the Union committed to their care.

ARTICLE X. Each delegation shall procure from their Secretaries, a correct list of all the members of the Union, in their respective societies, once in three months, and present the same to the Secretary of the Finance Committee.

BY-LAWS. ARTICLE II. At the hour of meeting, the Recording Secretary shall call the roll, and if a majority of the societies comprising the Union shall be represented by one delegate it shall form a quorum.

ARTICLE XV. If any society, or association, shall be in arrears for dues for three months, notice thereof shall be given by the Corresponding Secretary to the Secretary of said Society, or association, and if at the expiration of the fourth month they shall still be in arrears, they shall be suspended from all pecuniary advantages in case of a strike, and shall not be entitled to a voice in the proceedings of the Convention. . . .

National Trades' Union, Oct. 31, 1835, p. 2, col. 3, 4. The report of the committee sent to the Common Council is also found in the *Evening Post* of the same date.

[October 28] . . . Credentials were read from the following Societies: From the Leather Dressers, appointing Seth T. Clark, William Murphy and Lawrence Walsh, as their Delegates for the ensuing year. From the Glass Cutters, appointing James Westewater in the place of John Primrose, resigned. From the

Sailmakers, returning Thomas W. Lewis as a Delegate. Trade Society of Journeymen Tailors, appointing William Hemma, William Daniels, and Dennis McAuley, as Delegates. On motion, the credentials were approved, and the above named delegates severally invited to take seats in the Convention.

The committee appointed to inquire into the cause of the refusal, by the Common Council, of the use of a room, for the purpose of holding the session of the National Convention, lately convened in this city, made the following report which was adopted, and ordered published in the *National Trades' Union*, *New York Transcript*, and *Evening Post*, and such other papers as are friendly to our cause. The Committee of Inquiry appointed at a regular meeting of the Convention of the General Trades' Union of the city of New York and its vicinity, held on the evening of September 30th, 1835, to elicit information relative to the disposal of the application made by this Convention for the use of one of the public rooms, to hold the meetings of the National Trades' Union Convention, report, that they have endeavoured, as far as their limited time and difficult access to, the Honorable Fathers of our city would permit, to ascertain the real causes which led to the rejection of the application made by this Convention. The Committee first waited upon Silas M. Stillwell, Esq. Alderman of the 15th Ward, to whom the application had been given for presentation; and he informed them, that he had performed the duty requested; that, as usual with such applications, it was referred with power to the "Committee on Publick Places and Repairs," consisting of John Delamater of the 9th, Egbert Benson of the 2d, and Samuel Purdy of the 10th Wards; and that such applications from any general body of

citizens were always granted; and gave it as his opinion, that a refusal at that time was unprecedented.

Your Committee, through their chairman, then addressed the following note to John Delamater, chairman of the Committee, to whom the application was referred:

Sir—At a meeting of the Convention of the “General Trades’ Union of the City of New York and its Vicinity,” held 30th Sept. 1835, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

Resolved, that a committee of three be appointed to enquire into and report the reasons which urged the Common Council of this city to refuse the application of this Convention for a public room, to hold the meetings of the National Trades’ Union Convention.

In conformity with the above resolution, it becomes my duty to address you, as chairman of the Committee to whom the application was referred, and request of you a statement of the reasons which led to the rejection of the application above referred to. With great respect, I remain, &c.

L. D. SLAMM.

JOHN DELAMATER, Esq.

Your Committee waited several days, and no answer having been received, they wrote again, and yet they received no answer; which circumstance forced them to the conclusion, that, if the honorable gentleman had received the communication, he considered it beneath his dignity to correspond with men, for whom he has no particular respect, except at particular seasons. Being thus thrown into the dark, relative to the disposal of your application, your Committee were obliged to take and make use of such information as they were able to gather, other than that expected through the chairman on “Public Places and Repairs.” They were informed, that the application was sent, among other papers, from the Board of Aldermen to that of the Assistants, and referred to the like Committee, consisting of George Paulding of the 8th, Thomas Brady of the 6th, and Alexander Stewart of the 13th Wards:

and the usual mode of doing their business is by a joint meeting of the two committees, and they there take such action, upon subjects referred to them, as their wisdom may suggest. One of your Committee, while in conversation with Ald. Samuel Purdy on the subject, was informed, that the two committees had never been called together; "And indeed," said this faithful public servant: "it had altogether passed my recollection; and, had the Committee been called together, I should have went any way the majority might have determined."

Your Committee, with the little information they have been able to gather, are of opinion, that a majority in the Common Council were actuated by motives of opposition to the interest of the mechanics; or, the Committee of "Public Places and Repairs" grossly neglected the business referred to them, or meditated the refusal of your application, and had not the moral courage and honesty to make public their intentions.

Your Committee, as members of the General Trades' Union, a body formed not for party political purposes, regret the occurrence of any event which would cause any allusion to the party politics of the day; but a proper respect for themselves, and the great body of the mechanics of this city, impels them not to forego this opportunity of exposing the hypocrisy made manifest by this act of Common Council. At the time of their election, they pretended great indignation at the conduct of the individuals then in office; they branded them as a set of aristocrats, unworthy the suffrages of the people; they proclaimed them opponents to the best interests of the mechanics; and they called loudly upon the working classes to assist in hurling from office those contemners of the people's wishes. But mark and contrast the course pursued toward the mechanics by the Common Council upon whom so much of malignity had

been heaped, and that of the other who cried aloud that they should be the people's choice and that they, and they alone, could administer righteously our municipal affairs. The one in an open and manly manner, and without equivocation, lent a listening ear to the request of the mechanics, and granted their application, affording emphatic proof that the loud-mouthed denunciations showered so plentifully upon them, were but the empty and wicked bellowings of designing political demagogues.

The present democratic (!) Common Council, on whom the great majority of the mechanics bestowed their support, on being applied to for the use of one of the public rooms, referred the application to their committees; those committees took no notice of the reference, but, in an undignified and cowardly manner, treated it with contempt. Yes! treated with contempt an application made in a respectful manner, by the delegates representing a numerous and respectable, but poor portion of the inhabitants of this city.

Had the two Committees on "Public Places and Repairs" given the simple application a fair consideration, and made public their objections, if any they had, then would the people been able to judge whether those objections were valid; and your Committee would have had no occasion to have thus made public the hypocritical professions of these pretended friends of the people. But fearful of the ordeal of public opinion, they, like mute criminals, anticipating the judgment of their peers, if their weak and vacillating conduct were made known, remained speechless. Such alone is the conclusion your Committee, with the information they have been able to gather, have arrived at.

Numerous instances can be adduced, where the different city legislatures have granted to the members of

other professions, aside from the mechanical, a room to hold meetings for public purposes; and their right or policy so to do, has never been questioned. Nor does your Committee complain that such has been the course pursued towards other bodies of citizens; but they complain, that upon the mechanical part of the community, that part which gets the least benefit from the present mode of legislation, that upon them, and upon them alone, have the Honourable Common Council seen cause to refuse so small a request.

Your Committee, therefore, would recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

RESOLVED, that it be commended to the several societies composing the Trades' Union of this city, to convene and express their opinions of the insult offered them by the Common Council of this city, and especially by the men composing the Committees on "Public Places and Repairs," consisting of John Delamater, Egbert Benson, Samuel Purdy, George Paulding, Thomas S. Brady, and Alexander Stewart, for treating with contempt an application made by the mechanics of this city; and for grossly neglecting the duties of their office, to gratify their own vindictive feelings.

LEVI D. SLAMM, JOHN COMMERFORD,
CHARLES A. DAVIS [Committee].

A letter was received from John Ferral, President of the National Trades' Union, introducing the President of the United Hand Loom Weavers of Philadelphia, to the notice of the Convention, and stating that there had been a strike against a reduction of wages by that trade. After some remarks from the gentleman, and several members, a motion prevailed, appointing a committee, consisting of Messrs. Slamm, Johnson, and Smith to retire and draft resolutions expressive of the sense of this Convention on the subject.

This committee reported the following: Whereas, this Convention view with feelings of strong indignation, the attempt now making by the employing Hand Loom Weavers, of Philadelphia, to reduce the already too much depressed prices the journeymen receive for their labor; and whereas, we consider that a reduction of the prices they now receive (being about one dollar for fourteen hours close application to their toil) to be not only unjust, but cruel in the extreme; therefore, be it resolved, that the delegates of this Convention be requested to lay the same before their respective societies forthwith, and urge the propriety of taking up subscriptions to assist their fellow-mechanics of Philadelphia, now groaning under the oppressive and cruel burdens heaped upon them by their unfeeling and aristocratic employers. Resolved, that a committee of three be appointed to receive such monies as may be subscribed, and forward the same to the Journeymen Hand Loom Weavers, through the Philadelphia Trades' Union.

The following gentlemen were then appointed a committee for the purpose above specified: B. S. Gillespie, Isaac Odell, John H. Bowie. This committee gave notice that they would meet on Monday evening, Nov. 2, at seven o'clock, and also on Friday evening, 6th November, at Cronley's, 15 Park Row, for the purpose of receiving contributions, &c.

The Treasurer made a Report of the financial affairs of the Convention for the last year which, on motion, was accepted. . . .

National Trades' Union, Nov. 28, 1835, p. 2, col. 2.

[November 25] . . . Credentials were received from the Chair-makers and Gilders' Society, returning John Commerford, John C. Hedenburgh, and John Goodwin, as delegates. Credentials were also received from the United Society of Journeymen Sail-makers,

appointing John Davis a delegate, in the place of John Zimmerman, whose term of service had expired. On motion, the credentials were approved, and the above-named delegates invited to take seats in the convention.

A communication was received from Poughkeepsie, stating that the House Carpenters in that place were now on a strike against a reduction of wages. After some conversation, the following resolution was offered and adopted: resolved, that a committee of two be appointed, to proceed to Poughkeepsie, and investigate the affairs of the House Carpenters in that place, and report thereon to this convention on Monday evening next. Messrs. Gillespie and Odell were appointed the committee. . . .

National Trades' Union, Dec. 5, 1835, p. 2, col. 6.

[November 30] . . . The Committee appointed to visit Poughkeepsie, made a report respecting the House Carpenters of that place, which, on motion, was accepted.

The convention then proceeded to take up and discuss the amendments to the constitution and by-laws. . . .

National Trades' Union, Dec. 12, 1835, p. 2, col. 5.

[December 9] . . . Credentials were received from the Hand Loom Weavers, appointing John Kennedy, and Joseph Thompson as Delegates, in the place of James Thompson and Robert Foster. Credentials were also received from the Brush Makers, returning James Adams, Francis Moulien, and James Mills, as Delegates for the ensuing year. On motion, the credentials were approved, and the Delegates invited to take seats in the Convention.

The Corresponding Secretary read a Communication from the House Wrights of Boston, which was accepted.

On motion, the Convention then proceeded to take up and discuss the proposed amendments to the Consti-

tution and By-Laws, and several important alterations and amendments were carried, and a copy of the same ordered to be prepared for publication, and submitted to the next regular meeting. (By the amended Constitution, each Trade, or Art, that has a regularly organized Society of fifty members or under, will be entitled to three Delegates; to an additional Delegate for the next fifty members; and to another additional Delegate for the fifty succeeding members; another Delegate for the next seventy-five members; and to one more Delegate for every hundred members thereafter.—EDS. *National Trades' Union*.)

National Trades' Union, Jan. 2, 1836, p. 2, col. 2, 3.

[December 30] . . . Credentials were received from the Cordwainer's, Ladies' Branch, appointing John C. Cunningham, Henry Ennis, and Oramel Bingham, as Delegates. From the Tailors of Brooklyn, returning Wm. J. Leary, and Andrew M. Bennet, in the place of Richard Sharp, and Richard Carpenter, resigned. From the Cordwainers of New Brunswick, appointing Emery Ladd in the place of A. W. Mayo, resigned. The Credentials were approved, and the Delegates invited to take seats in the Convention.

The Constitution and By-Laws, as amended, were read, accepted and laid on the table. The resolution adopted at the last meeting according the Secretary of the Finance Committee, a salary of two dollars per month, was, on motion, added to the By-Laws.

Mr. Gillespie gave notice of the following, as an additional Section to Article 2, of the Constitution, which was laid on the table: "If a split shall take place in any society or trade, represented in the Union, upon application of the society so splitting, the Convention shall consider the subject, and if it appears that the interests of the trade will be promoted by said division or split,

they shall be eligible to admission. If the society from which they secede shall vote against their admission, they shall not be eligible, except they satisfy the Convention that they have at least double the number of members, and also superior regulations in trade."

Mr. Marsden gave notice of the following as amendments to the Constitution:

ARTICLE 2d. The business of this Union shall be conducted by Delegates, elected annually, by the different associations of artizans and mechanics, composing the same. Every association of thirty members or under, shall be entitled to send one Delegate—over thirty and under fifty to two Delegates—fifty and under one hundred to three Delegates—one hundred to four Delegates—and for every fifty above one hundred to one additional Delegate.

ARTICLE 17th. No Association shall be admitted into this Union, unless it be regularly organized, and consist of twenty or more members of the same Trade or Art. Any association wishing to be admitted, shall make application in writing, and shall therewith send a copy of its constitution to the Convention. The question of admission shall be decided by a majority of the Convention, within one and three months after such application has been made—but if an association from the same Trade or Art, shall at such time be in connexion with the Union, a majority of two thirds, shall be necessary to admit the association into the Union. . .

In consequence of some remarks from Messrs. Hawkins and Short, Messrs. Gillespie, John Commerford, Amos Waring, L. D. Slamm, and Wm. Murphy were appointed a committee to confer with the Men's Branch of Cordwainers. The Corresponding Secretary reported the correspondence for the last month, among which was a communication from the House Carpenters of

Poughkeepsie stating that their late strike had terminated satisfactorily, and they were now receiving the full wages contended for. A communication from the House Carpenters of New York was read and referred to a committee consisting of Messrs. Murphy, Bingham, and Slamm.

The following communication from the Boston House Wrights was read and ordered published.

Boston, Nov. 30th, 1835.

To the PRESIDENT OF THE TRADES' UNION OF N. YORK.

Sir, It affords peculiar pleasure to communicate the enclosed resolutions, adopted by the Journeymen House Carpenters' Association of this city. It is with deep regret, that we have not earlier acknowledged our obligations, but unavoidable circumstances have prevented us. We are obliged to acknowledge the defeat of our fondest wishes and our most ardent desires; but we trust that our defeat will retard our success for a short time only as the impressions we have produced must necessarily render success inevitable at no distant period. We cherish the liveliest hopes that measures will be taken during the ensuing winter, that will secure the realization of our just demands, and that in an amicable manner. As the nature of our demand becomes known, the public mind will appreciate the justice thereof, and as justice is the actuating motive of the disinterested we may in future justly expect a powerful co-operation of public opinion. Yours, &c.

FRANCIS A. SAWYER.

Whereas, in our recent though unsuccessful struggle for the establishment of our just and legitimate rights, we were induced to appeal to our fellow workingmen of New York and Philadelphia, for aid and support in the righteous cause in which we were engaged; and whereas, they having liberally responded to our appeal, it now becomes a duty to make known to them our feelings and the grateful sentiments which this Association entertains for their generosity, and the sacrifices which they have made in our behalf, and for the furtherance of the great cause of human emancipation. Therefore

RESOLVED, that we view the liberal and open hearted course pursued by the Mechanics of New York and Philadelphia in relation to us, as the precursor of the most happy and beneficial results, not only beneficial to us but to them, inasmuch as it will tend to enlist the hearty co-operation of all in the cause of the oppressed by extend-

ing the intercourse and uniting the physical and intellectual energies of the workingmen of the United States.

RESOLVED, that the hospitality with which our delegation was received, and the facilities rendered by the Trades' Unions of New York and Philadelphia, merit our warmest thanks and gratitude.

RESOLVED, that it is with the liveliest sense of gratitude that we acknowledge the aid afforded by the Trades' Union of New York to our delegation for the prosecution of the objects of their mission.

RESOLVED, as the undivided sense of this Association, that in acknowledging the aid received from the House Carpenters' and Locksmiths' Associations of New York, and the Associations of House Carpenters, Weavers, (Nos. 1 and 2) Hatters, Tailors, Cordwainers, (both branches), Bricklayers, Bookbinders, and Day Laborers, of Philadelphia, we cannot accord to them our gratitude in terms sufficiently expressive.

RESOLVED, that in acknowledging the extended and proffered aid which we have received, we acknowledge a paramount obligation to persevere with a fixed and unalterable determination in the cause in which we have been engaged.

RESOLVED, that we deplore the circumstances which have prevented that early and prompt expression of our feelings in relation to the subject of these resolutions, which justice to our benefactors and ourselves demands.

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions signed by the President and Secretary, be transmitted to each of the Trades' Unions and Associations herein named, and that they be published in such papers as may deem it expedient.

FRANCIS A. SAWYER, Pres't. — JOHN CUSHMAN, Sec'ry.

Information was received from Philadelphia, that the struggle of the Hand Loom Weavers had happily terminated, after a strike of ten weeks.

On motion, resolved, that each of the Societies represented in this Union, be requested to appoint one of their delegates as a member of the Finance Committee, and send notice thereof at the next meeting of the Convention.

After some conversation, the following resolutions were offered and adopted: resolved, that a Committee of three be appointed to confer with the editors of the

National Trades' Union on the expediency and propriety of establishing a daily newspaper, and that they be instructed to report at the next meeting. Resolved, that the Delegates be requested to lay the subject before their respective Societies. Messrs. Bingham, Gallagher, and Bristol were appointed the Committee. . .

National Trades' Union, Jan. 16, 1836, p. 2, col. 1.

[January 13] . . . Credentials were received from the Hand Loom Weavers, appointing Robert Buttersley, Thos. Rigbay, and James Davis, as additional delegates to the Convention. Credentials were also received from the Cabinet Makers, returning Asa Howard and Nicholas Welsh as delegates, and appointing Asa Howard a member of the Finance Committee. Credentials were likewise read from the Chair Makers, announcing that John C. Hedenburgh had been appointed a member of the Finance Committee. Credentials from the Locksmiths announced that Edward Moore had been appointed a member of the Finance Committee.

The Committee appointed at a previous meeting, to confer with the Editors of the *National Trades' Union* concerning the propriety of establishing a daily newspaper, made a report which was ordered to be printed for the use of the Delegates, who were requested to obtain instructions from their several Societies respecting the same by the next meeting of the Convention.

The minutes of the National Convention were then taken up, as unfinished business, read, and accepted. On motion, a Committee, consisting of Messrs. John Commerford, Joseph Thompson, and B. S. Gillespie, was appointed to select such parts of these proceedings as may require the special action of this Convention.

A Committee (consisting of Messrs. Commerford, Murphy, Bristol, Gillespie, and Patterson,) was ap-

pointed to look over the Constitution, and report if any further amendments or alterations were required. After which the Convention adjourned. . . .

National Trades' Union, Jan. 30, 1836, p. 2, col. 2, 3.

[January 27] . . . Credentials were received from the following Societies: From the Journeymen Umbrella Makers, requesting admission into the Union, and appointing John Witz, John Doughty, and Wm. Kilsby as their Delegates for the ensuing year. From the Bookbinders, appointing Richard Wier, as an additional Delegate, and announcing that John B. Parkes had been elected a member of the Finance Committee. From the Cordwainers of New Brunswick, appointing Francis A. Gordon a Delegate, in the place of William Robinson, resigned. From the Ladies' Cordwainers, appointing John Fricke, and Asahel Reed, as Delegates in place of Edward McKeeby and David Kilmer, resigned; and also announcing that Oramel Bingham had been elected a member of the Finance Committee. From the House Carpenters, appointing Wm. N. Marsden a member of the Finance Committee. From the Typographical Association, announcing that Hiram Tupper had been elected a member of the Finance Committee. On motion, the Credentials were accepted, and the Delegates invited to take seats in the Convention.

The following resolution was offered and adopted: resolved, that such of the Societies composing the Union as have neglected to appoint one of their Delegates a member of the Finance Committee, be requested to attend to the same immediately; and that the Delegates so appointed are hereby requested to attend a meeting of the Finance Committee, at 15 Park Row, on Wednesday, Feb. 17, 1836, at seven o'clock, precisely. . . .

Considerable discussion took place upon the amendments to the Constitution, proposed at the last meeting,

which ended in the appointment of a Special Committee (consisting of Messrs. Marsden, Witz, Bristol, Waring, and Gillespie,) to whom the whole matter was referred.

The Committee to whom had been referred the communication from the House Carpenters, received at the last meeting, reported. The Committee to whom was referred the communication from the "Union Society of Journeymen House Carpenters," respectfully report:

That they have given the communication an impartial examination, and mature consideration, and believe that it would be impolitic for this Convention to alter the part of the Constitution referred to in that document; inasmuch as that part of the Constitution which they request may be altered, has been under discussion for some months, and caused a variety of propositions as to the manner in which the Societies should be represented in the Convention. After a long and protracted debate the members of the Convention unanimously voted for the article as it now stands; as it reads the principle of representation according to numbers is acknowledged, and the larger Societies have elected additional Delegates. The Convention has now a sufficient number of members to transact the business. So as the Constitution now stands the smaller Societies have conceded much, and it behooves the larger ones to grant a little, and then all cause of complaint will be removed.

As our object is mutual protection, your Committee believe it would be ungenerous to accuse any Society represented in the Union of an assumption to power which they wished to use unjustly, or to the detriment of another. If the smaller Societies have a majority of Delegates in the Convention, it is not from any power of themselves that they have acquired it, but from the founders of the Union.

Were all the Journeymen House Carpenters of the cities of New York and Brooklyn to unite, they would, under the present article, be entitled to twenty-two Delegates, admitting their number to 1800 between the two places, and your Committee are of opinion that that would be sufficient for any trade or art.

It should be borne in mind by the Delegates, that in all governments and communities, every person is obliged to yield a little to the other, by the sacred bond that unites them together; if this was not the case we would find anarchy and confusion raging through the social compact. Whenever there is any thing justly obnoxious or unjust in the Constitution that affects any part of the members of the Union, it should be removed; but your Committee cannot conceive that the part of the Constitution referred to in the Memorial requires any alteration.

All of which is respectfully submitted. (Signed)
WM. MURPHY, LEVI D. SLAMM, ORAMEL BINGHAM.

The Report of the Committee respecting the establishment of a daily newspaper was then taken up, and after a discussion of considerable length, the following Resolutions were adopted: resolved, that it is expedient for this Convention to establish a Daily Penny Paper, conceiving it to be highly necessary to "sustain the honor and interest of the Union." Resolved, that a committee of five be appointed to report a plan for the establishment of the Paper, and also a Prospectus, and submit the same to the Convention at its next meeting. Messrs. Bingham, Commerford, Bristol, Murphy, and Slamm were appointed the Committee. . . .

National Trades' Union, Feb. 6, 1836, p. 2, col. 2.

[February 3] . . . Credentials were received from the Hat makers, appointing M. F. Spencer a member of the Finance Committee.

The Corresponding Secretary read a communication from the Philadelphia Trades' Union, introducing to the notice of the Convention, the Delegates from the Bookbinders of Philadelphia. On motion, Messrs. J. B. Parks, and Wm. Murphy, appointed a Committee to wait on and invite them to take seats in the Convention. After the delegates had arrived, and stated their case to the meeting, a committee (consisting of Messrs. McBeath, Slamm, Parks, Murphy, and Bingham,) was appointed to retire and draft resolutions, expressive of the sense of this Convention on the subject.

After a short recess, the committee returned and reported the following: Whereas the Journeymen Bookbinders of Philadelphia, are at present struggling under the tyranny and oppression of their employers, who have made an attempt at reducing their wages, far below what they conceive to be a fair remuneration, (and much less than they have received for years,) which reduction has been spurned with becoming dignity by the Journeymen, they therefore appeal to their fellow mechanics of New York and vicinity, to assist them in their present difficulties: therefore, resolved, that this Convention highly approve of the determined stand taken by the Journeymen Bookbinders of Philadelphia, against a reduction of wages. Resolved that the delegates of the different Trade Societies, attached to this Union, be instructed to lay the subject before their respective Societies, and urge the necessity of supporting their fellow mechanics, who are at this inclement season, driven to a stand for their rights, against aristocratical tyranny.

J. McBEATH, L. D. SLAMM, J. PARKS,
W. MURPHY, O. BINGHAM—Committee.

RESOLVED, that the several societies who may feel disposed to contribute for the aid of the Bookbinders of

Philadelphia, be requested to transmit the same, as soon as possible, to James McBeath, Treasurer of this Convention, who is authorized to forward all sums received for their use.

The Committee appointed at the last meeting, to prepare and report a plan and prospectus for the establishment of a daily penny newspaper, made their report, which was read twice, and after a protracted discussion, the whole matter was approved, and the report and prospectus ordered to be printed for the use of the Delegates. . . .

National Trades' Union, Feb. 20, 1836, p. 2, col. 1, 2. The report of the committee on the tailors' strike is also found in the *Evening Post*, Feb. 15, 1836, p. 2, col. 6. Special meeting.

[February 12] . . . Credentials were received from the Brush Makers, announcing that James Mills had been elected a member of the Finance Committee.

The Corresponding Secretary read a letter from Richmond, Va., respecting the formation of a Trades' Union in that place, and requesting a copy of the Constitution, and such other information respecting this Union as may be deemed useful to them in forming their contemplated Union. On motion, accepted, and the Secretary instructed to attend to the same.

A Committee from the Journeymen Tailors now on the turn-out for wages, having addressed the Convention, on motion, a Committee of Five was appointed to retire and draft resolutions expressive of the sense of the meeting on the subject. The President, and Messrs. Gillespie, Hemma, Bingham, and Lewis, were appointed the Committee, who immediately entered on the duty assigned them.

On motion, a recess of thirty minutes took place. The Convention having reassembled, the Committee made the following report:

Whereas, a combination of men, styling themselves the "Master Tailors," have through various newspapers declared that they "will not receive into their employ any man who is a member of the Union Trade Society of Journeymen Tailors of this city," we, the delegates of the different Trades in Convention assembled, considering that by the above avowal of proscription, these said masters are arrogantly attempting to coerce the independent spirited men who have taken upon themselves the unquestionable right of affixing a value to their own labour.

Viewing this scheme of these would-be masters as eminently calculated to impoverish and degrade whoever will bend to the unhallowed demand, the delegates belonging to this Convention, feel themselves warranted in pledging the united aid of every society in assisting the Journeymen Tailors to resist the spirit and the terms of disgrace proposed by the above styled Master Tailors. In upholding the men who are on the strike against this low, mean and dictatorial surrender of their privileges in the "pursuit of happiness," it is necessary to recur to the fact, in order that the public may properly appreciate the very philanthropic spirit of these most kind and protecting masters. In the first place, the Journeymen are not seeking an advance of wages; on the contrary, it is the Employers who have formed a combination, pledging themselves to forfeit a specific sum if they shrink from putting into execution a reduction of prices. Finding that the men stand firm and yield not, the masters attribute this unmeasured hardihood to a confidence in Union. Unable to make the reduction which they have so magnanimously pledged themselves in forfeits to secure, they become nervously exasperated, and administer another dose of forfeit, which demands of each of the high contracting parties, that he will

never, never employ any man who belongs to the "Union Society."

Having thus given the outlines of the matter at issue, we will leave the decision with the public. The unprejudiced cannot fail to see which scale should preponderate. We will leave the case of the journeymen and their employers, with those who really regard the happiness of all, as essentially necessary for the preservation of true and sound liberty. In this struggle, we behold the employer assuming to himself, that which he would justly and strenuously resist in others; he would not abandon the position that he and he alone, has the right of putting a price on the article which he offers for sale to the consumer. Yet, strange contradiction and wilful injustice, this same employer arrogates to himself the privilege of dictating to the real producer the price of which the said employer's avarice shall be the graduator.

If the public were to form a combination, pledging themselves not to buy from the master tailors, unless they sold their goods at a reduced price, we should then hear a most lamentable story from these said masters.

The next question which we would press the public to examine, is, whether the public can be benefitted by the reduction of the wages of the men. The employers, it will be seen, are not acting for the public, but for their own immediate gain. They have not proposed that the amount of the contemplated reduction shall benefit any but themselves.

Another consideration is, whether the nature of the times will equitably admit of a curtailment of wages. We find house rent advancing, and every necessary of life additionally taxed. We would therefore respectfully ask every person who feels an interest for his fellow beings if this is a proper time for the master tailors

to be encouraged in the ungenerous stand which they have taken? With these considerations in view, your committee submit the following resolutions:

RESOLVED, that this Convention recommend the different Societies attached to this Union to take the preparatory steps as soon as convenient to ensure additional means to support the United Society of Journeymen Tailors while on the strike.

RESOLVED, that the Corresponding Secretary of this Union be instructed to open immediate correspondence with the different Unions of the United States, apprising said Unions of the struggle of the Journeymen Tailors.

RESOLVED, that the above preamble and resolutions be signed by the officers of this Convention and published in the *Evening Post*, *Evening Star*, *Sun*, and *Transcript*. . .

The above report, after being read, was unanimously adopted. . .

National Trades' Union, Feb. 27, 1836, p. 2, col. 1, 2.

[February 24] . . . Credentials were received from the Saddlers' Society, requesting admission into the Union, to date their membership from the last month, and appointing Andrew T. Stewart, Horatio M. Hinchman, and Cornelius Clark, as their Delegates to the Convention for the ensuing year. From the Cordwainers of New Brunswick, appointing Cornelius Ten Broeck a Delegate in the place of John C. Pallis, resigned. From the Curriers, appointing John Albright a Delegate in the place of John B. Atwell; and announcing that James Potter had been elected a member of the Finance Committee. From the Tailors, announcing that William Hemma had been appointed a member of the Finance Committee. From the Stone Cutters, appointing Robert Mein a member of the Finance Com-

mittee. From the Rope Makers, appointing John Denyse a member of the Finance Committee. On motion, the credentials were approved, and the Delegates elect invited to take their seats.

The Committee appointed to confer with the editor of the *National Trades' Union*, made a Report, which was, on motion, accepted. . . .

The Corresponding Secretary read the correspondence he had held during the last month, among which were letters from the Washington Trades' Union, Philadelphia, Albany, and several other places.

One of the Delegates from New Brunswick, submitted a statement of the grievances of the Cordwainers in that place; and, on motion, Henry Ennis, Oramel Bingham, and B. S. Gillespie, were appointed a Committee to confer with them and report to this Convention. A letter from the Bookbinders of Philadelphia was read, stating that they were still on a strike.

A Committee from the Tailors now on a stand against a reduction of wages, having requested an interview, and addressed the Convention, the following resolution was offered and adopted: "Resolved, that the different Societies composing this Union be requested to hold special meetings immediately, to take measures to raise funds to sustain the Journeymen Tailors of this city in their present struggle against a reduction of wages."

At the request of one of the Delegates from the Curriers, a Committee (consisting of Messrs. Welsh, Reed, and Slamm) was appointed to confer with that Society. Mr. Gillespie offered the following: "Resolved that the Delegates be requested to lay before their respective Societies the propriety of raising their dues to 12½ cents per month."

The following Report, submitted at a previous meeting, was then taken up: The Committee appointed to

devise a plan for the establishment of a daily penny paper, and draft a prospectus therefor, report:

That they have had under their consideration several plans, and have come to the conclusion to submit the following, as the one most likely to elicit the approbation of the several societies composing the Union. That the paper be established as a stock concern between those Unions and Societies that may wish to purchase shares; the whole amount to be limited to \$1000; Unions or Societies to purchase any amount not to exceed \$200 worth of the stock, and to share the dividends in proportion to the amount of their investment, provided that such Societies are members of a Trades' Union, and shall forfeit their shares in case of a withdrawal from their respective Unions. In order to carry this plan into effect as soon as possible, your committee recommend that the Corresponding Secretary be directed to make the proposition to such Unions as shall be deemed proper by the Convention, and request their answers as soon as practicable. Also, transmitting to them a prospectus and the plan for the general government of the paper—the same to be submitted by the delegates to their several Societies—and report, if possible, at the next regular meeting of the Convention.

The following is recommended as a plan for conducting its publication: It shall be under the control of five directors, to be chosen by the Convention from among the number of its delegates, who shall be empowered to employ an Editor, Agent, Reporter, &c. as they may consider necessary; said directors to report monthly, or oftener if required, to the Convention, the amount of receipts and expenditures, and their proceedings generally in relation to the paper; a copy of said report to be transmitted to such Union or Societies as may be connected with the concern. The directors to

be removed from office at the discretion of the Convention, and their terms of service to expire on the last Wednesday in August of each year; at which time others shall be elected. Your committee recommend that the directors be immediately elected, and that \$100 be appropriated as the share of this Union. The directors to be empowered to proceed in the publication as soon as they have \$400 in hand. All monies received for the above purpose to be placed in the Treasurer's hands, from whom a majority of the directors shall have power to draw the same.

Your committee also recommend the following Prospectus for your consideration:

"THE UNION," a daily penny paper, devoted to the interests of the producing classes, will be issued as soon as sufficient encouragement shall warrant the undertaking.

The Trades' Union of the city of New York, feeling a deep interest in the welfare of the producing classes, feel it incumbent upon them to establish a daily paper. Their object is not so much that it may become a source of pecuniary profit, but rather serve as a shield against the misrepresentations of the principles and motives that govern Trades' Unions, echoed and re-echoed by designing men, whenever an opportunity offers itself, merely to keep, if possible, the oppressed laborer in more degrading servitude.

Our object in the formation of Trades Unions was not to trample upon the rights of the employer, was not to create a feeling of enmity against the non-producers, was not, as is often charged, to tear down the whole social system; it was merely to advance the moral and pecuniary interest of the oppressed mechanic—to narrow, if possible, the line of distinction between the employer and employed; in a word, to raise in the estimation of themselves and others, those who are the producers of the necessities and luxuries of life, who have been, as by right, long kept in a state of abject vassalage.

To assist in producing this much wished-for reformation, it has been considered necessary to establish a daily paper, as a vehicle of communication between Trades' Unions and the public.

The leading objects to which this paper will be devoted, are, to

advocate the cause and defend the rights of the producing classes, to encourage and facilitate the formation of 'Trades' Unions, and to promote concert of action and harmony between those already formed. It will be the appropriate duty of this paper, also, to correct misrepresentations of the objects or acts of the 'Trades' Unions generally, or of slanders against individuals belonging to them.

The general plan upon which we propose to conduct this paper, is, 1st. To devote its columns extensively to subjects of political economy and general politics; under which head it will be our duty to inquire into the whole extent of evils under which the producing classes are suffering. 2d. To publish such Congressional and Legislative proceedings as our limited space will admit. 3d. To give a general view of foreign and domestic news. 4th. To note improvements in the mechanic arts, and scientific discoveries; and 5th. To furnish biographical, historical and literary notices, and such other miscellaneous matter as may be deemed useful, instructive, and entertaining. Party politics, and religious or irreligious discussions will be excluded from its columns. Subscribers are respectfully solicited.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

O. BINGHAM, H. D. BRISTOL, LEVI D. SLAMM,
WILLIAM MURPHY, JOHN COMMERFORD.

This Report, after being read, underwent a discussion of much length, which ended in the adoption of the Report, and, on motion, resolved, that the Convention proceed to the election of five Directors. Messrs. Tupper and Hemma were appointed Tellers, and the Convention proceeded to nominate candidates. The roll was then called, and the members deposited their votes as their names were announced. The President having vacated the chair in favor of the Vice President, the Tellers announced that the following gentlemen had been elected: Charles A. Davis, Oramel Bingham, Levi D. Slamm, William Smith, B. S. Gillespie.

On motion, the Directors were then instructed to proceed on their duty, and five hundred copies of the Prospectus were ordered to be printed. . . .

National Trades' Union, March 12, 1836, p. 2, col. 4.

[March 9] . . . Credentials were received from the Chair-makers, announcing that Ralph Ward had been elected a Delegate in the place of John C. Hedenburgh, resigned; and that he had likewise been appointed a member of the Finance Committee. Credentials were also received from the Tailors of Brooklyn, appointing George W. Hand a Delegate in the place of Wm. B. Bliss, resigned. On motion, the credentials were approved, and the Delegates elect invited to take their seats.

On motion, Messrs. Bingham, Tupper, and Slamm were appointed a Committee to wait on and invite the Delegates to the Convention of Cordwainers, now holding in this city, to take seats with the meeting this evening. A large number of the Delegates thus invited, appeared and took seats with the Convention. After being greeted with welcome by the President, Mr. English replied thereto, and gave a long and interesting account of the late proceedings of the Philadelphia Trades' Union, which was listened to with much apparent satisfaction by the numerous assemblage.

Mr. Reed, from the Committee appointed at the last meeting to confer with the Curriers, made a report, which was accepted. Mr. Bingham, from the Committee appointed to confer with the Cordwainers of New Brunswick, stated that they were now standing out for wages. He also submitted some printed documents both from the employers and the journeymen, thus placing before the Convention "both sides of the story."

Mr. Gillespie offered the following: resolved, that a Committee of three be appointed to investigate a document purporting to be a decision of Judge Savage upon the law of combinations, and recently published in some of the daily papers: first, for the purpose of ascer-

taining whether the document be genuine; secondly, whether if said document emanated from Judge Savage it was issued in his capacity of Judge or as a feed counsellor, and to examine its contents and report thereon. Messrs. Gillespie, Commerford, and Slamm, were appointed the Committee. Resolved that the above Committee have power to call a special meeting of the Convention whenever they shall be ready to report.

Mr. Gillespie having tendered his resignation as one of the Directors elected at the last meeting to superintend the publication of a daily newspaper, proposed to be established by the Convention, a motion was made that an election be forthwith held to fill the vacancy. Messrs. Marsden and Gillespie were appointed Tellers, and the Convention proceeded to ballot, which resulted in the election of John B. Parkes.

Reports were then received from several Societies, who wished to take stock in the concern, and the money received given in charge of the Treasurer. On motion, resolved, that the several Societies who may wish to take stock in the daily paper, about to be established by this Convention, are requested to forward the amount they intend investing to James McBeath, Treasurer as soon as possible.

After some conversation, a Committee (consisting of Messrs. Commerford, Cunningham, and Gillespie) was appointed to wait on the Societies of Piano-Forte makers, and Comb makers.

It having been stated that the Union Trade Society of Journeymen Tailors, now on a stand against a reduction of wages, had opened an establishment and commenced business on their own account, the following resolution was offered by Mr. Davis, and unanimously adopted: resolved, that this Convention cheerfully rec-

commend to the several Societies of which it is composed, and to the mechanics generally, to extend whatever patronage they may have to prefer in the tailoring line of business, to the establishment of the Union Trade Society of Journeymen Tailors, conducted by Messrs. Faulkner and Levingston, at 164 Broadway.

After some desultory conversation, the Convention adjourned.

National Trades' Union, March 26, 1836, p. 2, col. 2. Special meetings.

[March 23] . . . Credentials were received from the Glass Cutters, announcing that Howard Hill had been appointed a member of the Finance Committee. Credentials were also received from the Umbrella Makers, announcing that John Witts had been appointed a member of the Finance Committee.

Mr. Commerford, from a Committee appointed at a previous meeting, to examine and report upon a document, purporting to be a decision by Judge Savage, of the Supreme Court of this state, read some portions of a Report, but stated that it was not intended as a full Report. . . On motion, resolved, that this Convention recommend that a general meeting of mechanics and workingmen be called, to take into consideration the late decision of Chief Justice Savage, and to adopt such measures as may be deemed expedient to advance the interests and support the cause of the producing classes. Resolved, that a Committee of three be appointed to make the necessary arrangements. Messrs. Gillespie, Slamm, and Waring were appointed the Committee.

At the request of Mr. Murphy, a Committee, (consisting of Messrs. Bingham, Gallagher, and Parkes,) was appointed to confer with the Curriers. Messrs. Fricke, Marsden, and Doughty were also appointed a Committee to confer with the Brush Makers. On mo-

tion of Mr. Thompson, a Committee, (consisting of Messrs. Slamm, Waring, and Mein,) were appointed a Committee to confer with the Weavers.

Mr. Fricke, from the Committee appointed to confer with the Cordwainers of New Brunswick, stated that their strike still continued, and moved the appointment of a Committee to proceed to that place, and report the state of their affairs to the Convention on Wednesday evening next. This motion was adopted, and Messrs. Bingham and Gillespie were appointed the Committee.

After considerable debate, and various propositions, the following resolutions were adopted: resolved, that the 11th Article of the Constitution be so amended as to make the dues of members twelve and a half cents per week, until further notice. Resolved, that the delegates be instructed to take immediate measures to inform their several Societies of these proceedings, and request them to make the necessary arrangements respecting the same.

The Committee appointed to confer with the Weavers, made the following Report, which was adopted: The Committee appointed to confer with the Weavers, report—that they are fully of opinion that the prices now received by the Journeymen Weavers to be utterly inadequate to the support of their families. The wages they now receive does not on an average exceed six dollars per week. The advance they anticipate by their new list of prices, will only add the paltry sum of twelve and a half cents to their present daily compensation; and for the inadequate compensation they now receive, they are obliged to work from twelve to fourteen hours per day. The Committee believe that the situation of the Weavers to be far inferior to that of any other class of mechanics in the country, and they would therefore propose, that should the Union sanction their anticipat-

ed strike, that the concentrated energies of the Union be put forth to sanction this much oppressed class of mechanics in their strike for their just demands. The Committee therefore propose the following resolution for adoption: resolved, that this Convention, viewing the present compensation of the Weavers to be such as would make it utterly impossible for them to live as men should live—and believing that the anticipated advance of their wages to be so moderate that we not only willingly sanction the strike of the Weavers, but we will use all our means and influence in sustaining them, should circumstances require it.

LEVI D. SLAMM, AMOS WARING, ROBERT MEIN.

The Committee appointed to confer with the Leather Dressers, also made a Report, which was adopted. The Committee appointed to confer with the Brush Makers, also made a Report, which was likewise adopted. . . .

National Trades' Union, April 2, 1836, p. 3, col. 2, 3.

[March 30] . . . Credentials were received from the following Societies: From the Saddlers, appointing Richard A. W. Fisher a Delegate and member of the Finance Committee in the place of Alexander T. Stewart, resigned. From the Cordwainers, of New Brunswick, appointing John Pulis and James Graham as Delegates in the place of Emery Ludd and Francis A. Gordon, resigned. From the Hatters, appointing Amos Perigo a Delegate in the place of M. T. Spencer, resigned. From the Ladies' Cordwainers, appointing John Worrall a Delegate in the place of John C. Cunningham, resigned. From the Rope Makers, appointing Wm. Marshall a Delegate in the place of Jabez Ross, resigned. On motion, the Credentials were approved, and the Delegates invited to take their seats.

Mr. Commerford, from the Committee appointed at a previous meeting to report upon a Document purporting to be a decision of the Supreme Court of this State, by Chief Justice Savage, read a long Report, which was unanimously adopted, and ordered to be published in the New York *Transcript* and *National Trades' Union*.

On motion, Messrs. Gillespie, Slamm, and McBeath, were appointed a Committee to confer with the Typographical Association respecting their Scale of Prices. Messrs. Gallagher, Walsh, and Hill were also appointed a Committee to confer with the Ladies' Cordwainers for the like purpose. Messrs. Odell, Doughty, and Hemma, were likewise appointed a Committee to confer with the Chair Makers.

Mr. Marsden, from the Committee on Revising the Constitution, made a Report, which was accepted, and laid on the table. . .

Mr. Bingham, from the Committee appointed to visit New Brunswick, made a Report stating that the Cordwainers in that place were still standing out for wages.

The Committees appointed in the early part of the meeting, to confer with the Typographical Association, the Ladies' Cordwainers, and the Chair Makers, made favorable Reports respecting the different Societies, which were unanimously adopted. . .

National Trades' Union, April 9, 1836, p. 2, col. 2.

[April 6] . . . Credentials were received from the Ladies' Cordwainers appointing Alonzo Judson and Thomas Dwyer, as Delegates in place of Amos Waring and Asahel Reed, resigned. Credentials were also received from the Cabinet Makers, appointing Thomas O. Butler a Delegate in the place of Nicholas Welsh, resigned. On motion, the credentials were approved,

and the delegates elected invited to take seats in the Convention.

Messrs. Goodwin, Howard and Hemma, were appointed a Committee to confer with the Saddlers, at the request of one of the Delegates from that trade. Mr. Pullis, reported that the difficulties between the Cordwainers of New Brunswick, and their employers were still unsettled, and that Society in that place were at present engaged in commencing an establishment upon their own account, which he hoped would give employment to at least a part, if not the whole, of the journeymen who were now idle. Reports were also made by different Delegates respecting the affairs of Weavers, Curriers, and several other Societies.

Considerable conversation was had respecting the Daily newspaper on the eve of being established by the Convention, and several Societies sent in their money which they had appropriated for stock in the concern, and it was placed in the hands of the Treasurer. . . .

National Laborer, May 28, 1836, p. 39, col. 4.

[May 23] . . . A communication and credentials were received from the Society of Morocco Beamsmen, announcing that they had resolved to join the Trades' Union, and had appointed George Harris, Thomas Wilson, and John McElwain, as their delegates. Credentials were also received from the Cabinet Makers, appointing James S. Gordon a delegate in place of Thomas O. Butler, resigned. Also, from the Ladies' Cordwainers, appointing William Masterson a delegate in place of John Fricke, resigned. On motion, the credentials were accepted, and the delegates invited to take seats in the Convention.

The committee appointed at a previous meeting to draft a preamble and resolutions expressive of the sense

of this Convention in relation to the dictatorial conduct of the Employing Leather Dressers, reported the following, which were unanimously adopted, and ordered to be published in the proceedings:

Whereas, The Employing Leather Dressers of the cities of New York and Brooklyn, in a spirit of tyranny and dictatorial impudence unequalled in the annals of American mushroom aristocracy, have taken it upon themselves to publicly announce that no man in their employ shall have the privilege of belonging to an association for the better protection of his interest; and in obedience to such annunciation have discharged their workmen—thus, virtually declaring that it is their prerogative, that they who labor for them, shall, as in duty bound, think with them; and whereas, such an assumption of power on the part of these employers, is an attempted violation of the constitutional and natural rights of American citizens—subversive of the fundamental principles of our government—a degradation which, if acquiesced in by the laboring men, would place them on a level with the serfs of the Russian autocrat, and make dark the republican atmosphere of this boasted land of liberty, for a long and a wicked reign of anarchy and despotism. And whereas, such a result is one much to be deprecated, it therefore behooves us, the representatives of the different mechanical branches of this city, in Convention of the General Trades' Union assembled, to exert all our energies to sustain these men who are now battling against the enemies of the rights of man. Therefore

RESOLVED, that the conduct of the employers in question is such as merits the indignant reprobation of all men who love freedom and hate oppression; inasmuch as they have endeavored to abridge those rights for which our fathers of the revolution so gloriously con-

tended and so emphatically achieved; and to sacrifice one jot or tittle of them would make all the boasted liberties and privileges of the working man, but "like the baseless fabric of a vision," and place in the hands of an ignorant and contemptible aristocracy the power to feed or starve us, whenever they as the kind and generous dispensers of good or evil, should consider it their interest so to do.

RESOLVED, that this Convention solemnly recommend to the individuals composing the Society thus persecuted, to stand fast and tremble not; and though the outpourings of fury of their "lordly dictators," should be mighty in the extreme, let them firmly resist such an attempted innovation upon their rights as did the patriots of olden times, even unto death! and the members of this Union pledge themselves, so far as in them lies, to sustain them in their manly efforts.

RESOLVED, that it be recommended to the different Trades' Unions in the United States to publicly request the members of the trade now standing against insolent tyranny, to withhold coming here, until after the difficulties shall have been settled; and that all such Unions be also requested to take immediate measures to aid in sustaining these poor men, as the principle involved effects equally, all who earn their bread by the sweat of their brows.

RESOLVED, that to carry into effect the objects of the above resolutions, the Corresponding Secretary be directed to open forthwith a correspondence with all the Unions in the country, and that he urge upon them the absolute necessity for their immediate action upon this subject.

The following resolutions were then offered, and unanimously adopted: resolved, that all Trades' Union Societies who have taken, or may hereafter take one

hundred dollars worth of stock in the daily penny paper, shall be entitled to one director. Resolved, that the delegates from the different Societies be requested to use their exertions in their several Societies, to increase the subscription list of "The Union" newspaper, and that they also, if practicable, endeavor to get published the notices for their meetings, instead of the usual mode of serving them. . . .

(e) A TYPICAL STRIKE—THE BAKERS

(1) The Demands.

Working Man's Advocate, June 14, 1834, p. 1, col. 2. Resolutions passed at a meeting of the journeymen loaf-bread bakers early in June, 1834. The Bakers' Trades' Union Society was said to be composed of about 300 members.

. . . RESOLVED, that the old system of working by the week be abolished, and that the Society deem it expedient that the following rules be adopted, as the most equitable between the employer and the employed, by which to regulate the Loaf Bread Business in this City hereafter, and they were accordingly adopted.

1st. RESOLVED, that we consider \$1 per barrel a fair and reasonable equivalent for our labor.

2d. RESOLVED, that we consider 9 barrels per week for each hand, a fair average, and that no man or men be compelled to work at a lower rate.

3d. RESOLVED, that we consider it as conducive to the welfare of the Trade, that no employer retain more than one Apprentice at one time, and him under indenture for no less than five years; and said Apprentices' employer to be paid as he progresses.

4th. RESOLVED, that we deem it expedient, in accordance with the customs of man, sanctioned by the laws of God, that there be one day out of seven set apart as a day of peace and rest, on which every man may follow the dictates of his own conscience; and therefore

5th. RESOLVED, that no sponge be ready before 8 o'clock on the Sabbath evening. . .

(2) Action of the Trades' Union.

New York *Evening Post*, June 10, 1834, p. 3, col. 1.

STRIKE OF THE JOURNEYMEN BAKERS. To the Public: the undersigned Committee, appointed by the General Trades' Union, having now before them a well attested statement of facts which sufficiently prove that the condition of the Journeymen Bakers in this city has been for some time in reality much worse than that of the southern slaves, submit for the inspection of the public a few instances taken from a very long list.

1st. Three men and a boy have had to bake 60 barrels per week, have had to labour 115 hours each week, (doing six men's work) and have received about 50 cents per barrel.

2nd. Four men have had to bake 54 barrels per week, have had to labour 112 hours each week, (doing nearly six men's work) and have received about 60 cents per barrel.

3rd. Five men have had to bake from 65 to 70 barrels per week, have had to labour 115 hours each week, (doing nearly seven men's work) and have received about 40 cents per barrel.

The above facts undoubtedly prove all that we have asserted, and we now call upon the public to know whether those employers who persist in requiring from their men much more than their nature can long bear, viz: from 18 to 20 hours labour out of the 24—are to be sustained in their demands, or whether they will not assist the oppressed Journeymen in their present attempt to procure a fair equivalent for their labour.

We have also to state that the General Trades' Union have resolved to support the Journeymen Bakers in their

present course, and are determined by all just and honorable means, to raise them if possible to a fair standing among the other mechanics of the city.

In conclusion we respectfully suggest, that the public in general can in no way more effectually support our cause, than by bestowing their patronage on those employers who have nobly agreed to give the wages required. In order to accomplish this end, we give below a list of those employers, as far as we have ascertained, and shall continue to do so from day to day, until all difficulties are adjusted.

WILLIAM HEWITT, THOS. BONNER,
DAVID SCOTT, ROBT. BEATTY,
JOHN H. BOWIE,

Committee of the General Trades Union.

New York, June 10th, 1834.

[List of twenty-three employers omitted.]

(3) Appeal to the Bakers of the United States.

Working Man's Advocate, June 14, 1834, p. 3, col. 4. Also published in
the *New York Evening Post*, June 12, 1834, p. 1, col. 4.

GENEAL TRADES' UNION. To the Journeymen Bakers throughout the United States.

The employers in this city having advertised for hands and promised you work, it becomes necessary that you should know the circumstances under which your brethren here are at present laboring.

A statement of facts has been submitted to the General Trades' Union, showing that the Journeymen employed at the Loaf Bread business have for years been suffering worse than Egyptian bondage; they have had to labor on an average from eighteen to twenty hours out of the twenty-four, and have not received more on the average than seven or eight dollars per week; the Trades' Union, after mature deliberation, appointed a Committee of five persons to commune and advise the

Bakers relative to the best means to be pursued in order to obtain that which every man is entitled to, a fair equivalent for his labor; and the Journeymen Bakers, with the unanimous sanction of this Committee, have required from their employers the following, viz: one dollar per barrel for baking, and that nine barrels per week be a fair average for one man's work: to this demand a great many of the employers have assented as just and reasonable – and I believe every unprejudiced man will admit it to be such, when he is aware that the hard bread or biscuit Bakers receive one dollar per barrel, and have much less trouble attendant on their operations, as they have no sponge to set.

The question then is, whether the Journeymen Bakers in other parts will come to this city, in order to perpetuate, on their brethren and themselves, a state of things worse than the condition of negro slaves, or whether they will not rather spurn the proffered offer of their oppressors, and allow us to accomplish the noble work thus began.

To the members of the different Trades' Unions and the mechanics and working men generally throughout the Union, I now take the liberty of addressing myself. I would call upon you all individually and collectively, to use every means consistent with honor and the laws, to prevent any Journeymen Bakers from coming here at present, and sustain those who may chance to be unemployed as far as lies in your power. By so doing, you will be entitled to, and will receive, the heartfelt gratitude of the Trades' Union, and the working men generally in this city. Yours respectfully,

JOHN H. BOWIE, Cor. Sec'y, General Trades' Union.
New York, June 8th, 1834.

All Editors friendly to our cause will please to re-
publish the above.

jero It

(4) The Remedy - Trade Agreements.

The Man, June 16, 1834, p. 3, col. 2.

That the public may be acquainted with the reasons why the Trades' Union have given its sanction to the strike of the Journeymen Bakers, and also the justice of their demands, we present the two following facts selected from among others. William B. Humbert, whose name honorably heads the list of those who have acceded to the demands of the journeymen as being nothing more than a just compensation for their labor, has baked on an average fifty-eight barrels per week; for the manufacture of which into bread he has been in the habit of paying \$54.50, and employing six men and two apprentices. Mr. Mumby, of Mott street, one of those who refused to accede to their demands, and declares that he will renounce the business rather than succumb, has baked also on an average fifty-eight barrels per week, for the manufacture of which into bread he has been paying \$31, and employing three men and one boy, thus putting into his own pocket twenty-three dollars and fifty cents per week, which sum Mr. Humbert was dividing among his journeymen, and thus annually appropriating to himself \$1,222, which in justice belongs to those he employed. To enable him to accumulate annually this sum, the men have had to labor from 110 to 120 hours per week, and sometimes 24 hours without cessation, deprived, also, of the privileges of the Sabbath, in consequence of which their constitutions have been destroyed, and they have prematurely become tenants of the alms house or potters' field.

The Trades' Union now appeals to the justice and humanity of the public, to second its efforts to ameliorate the condition of our fellow producers, the Journeymen Bakers, who are forced by necessity into the employ of such men.

The Trades' Union assures the public that in giving its sanction to strikes it will always be governed by the maxim, "live and let live," and while it is willing that employers shall have a just and equitable profit from the labor of those they employ, it will always endeavor to obtain for those who labor a just remuneration for their services, and always stand ready to succor to the utmost those who may suffer from the oppression of the selfish and avaricious; believing that these efforts will meet with the approval of all just and honorable men. The Convention trust that the day is not far distant when the just and honorable among the employers will see the necessity of obliterating the line of demarkation still existing between employer and employed, and by friendly conferences doing away the necessity of those frequent strikes which are alike detrimental to themselves and to the public. Signed in behalf of the Convention.

ROBERT TOWNSEND, ELY MOORE, JOHN H. BOWIE,
DAVID SCOTT, WILLIAM HEWITT, ROBERT BEATTY.

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(f) THE FRUITS OF TRADES' UNIONS

New York Journal of Commerce, June 10, 1835, p. 1, col. 1. Editorial.

The turn-outs which are taking place among the different classes of mechanics in all our large cities are the legitimate fruits, and no doubt the concerted results, of Trades Unions. At this moment hundreds of men in this city and Philadelphia, are spending their time in idleness, because their late employers would not permit them to make both sides of the bargain. They are aping the degenerate practices of English operatives, and like them will find that after all, they have mistaken their true interests. We consider it the bounden duty of employers to resist the demands of such combinations.

At the same time, we wish to see all men, mechanics as well as others, receive an adequate compensation for their labor. What is an adequate compensation in any particular case, is not likely to be determined justly, by the separate judgment of the employers or the employed. If employers should combine to depress the price of labor, or check its advance, we should remonstrate as loudly against their conduct, as we now do against the employed. The true regulator of prices, whether of labor, goods, real estate, or any thing else, is demand. If men abandon this guide, and seek to force prices either up or down, by combinations and turn-outs, the effect will inevitably be a reaction. For instance, if shoe-making is by any artificial means rendered more profitable than other mechanical employments, there will be a rush into that business; and then there will be too many shoe-makers for the work to be done. The Trades Unions endeavor to counteract this consequence, by attempting to force up the price of all mechanical labor simultaneously, or nearly so. . .

(g) THE EMPLOYERS ORGANIZE

(1) The Curriers and Leather Dealers.

Preamble and resolutions adopted at a meeting of the "Employers, Curriers and Leather Dealers, of the city of New York and Brooklyn," on March 24, 1836, from the *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer*, March 26, 1836, p. 2, col. 6. Similar resolutions passed on March 21 by the employers of Newark were published in the same issue of the *Courier and Enquirer*.

. . . Whereas certain journeymen of the cities of New York, Brooklyn and Newark, have connected themselves with the society called "The Trades Union Society," and have conspired together to raise their wages, and to dictate to their employers what price they shall pay for the services of such journeymen curriers, on and after the 21st of March, instant— and

Whereas we consider all such combinations danger-

ous, because they threaten violence to those who do not, and absolute pauperism to those who do comply with their rules and regulations—illegal, because they are injurious to trade, and prevent us from coming into successful competition with other manufacturies of a similar kind in our neighboring towns and cities, unequal and unjust in their operations because they compel us to pay the same wages to the ordinary labourer as to the most skillful—unnecessary, because labour, like every other commodity, will seek its own level, and its true value, in an open and unfettered market; and in a country where individual rights, freedom of trade, of action, and employment, are guaranteed to every citizen—and impolitic, because they take from the honest and industrious mechanic, every incentive to superior skill, and renewed exertions, by bringing down their services to a level with others of less merit, and by taking from their hard earned wages, a portion to support the idle and unemployed members of the Society; and because they give to the slothful and careless, encouragement in their idleness and inattention, by giving them relief when unemployed; and full wages for their negligence when employed.

Therefore, RESOLVED, that while we acknowledge the right of every man, in his individual capacity, to demand whatever price he chooses for his labour—and while we are willing to give our journeymen such wages for their services as shall amply compensate them, and enable them to prosper, and ourselves to compete successfully in open market, with our neighbors—yet, we deny the rights, and deprecate the policy of combining and conspiring to dictate terms on which journeymen shall be employed—or by which their labour shall be regulated.

RESOLVED, that we will not consent to give the bill

of prices demanded on and after 21st inst. by the journeymen curriers, members of the Trades Union Society and that we will not be compelled to pay the same price to ordinary workmen, as to the more skilful, merely because they are members of said Society.

RESOLVED, that we will protect our own rights, and interests of our fellow-citizens, against the destructive influence of the Trades Union Society, and that we will not employ any man who is known to be a member of that or any other society which has for its object the dictation of terms or prices for which workmen shall engage themselves.

RESOLVED, that we will especially protect all journeymen curriers who are now or hereafter may be in our employ, who are not members of the Trades Union, or of any similar society.

RESOLVED, that the preamble and resolutions be published in such papers as the committee think advisable.

LOSEE V. NOSTRAND, President—EDWIN SMITH, Sec'y.

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(2) The Cordwainers.

Resolutions adopted at a meeting of the manufacturers and retailers of the ladies' branch of the boot and shoe business on April 8, 1836, from the *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer*, April 11, 1836, p. 2, col. 5. Other employers' associations were formed about the same time.

At a meeting of the manufacturers and retailers of the ladies' branch of Boot and Shoe business in the city of New York at Congress Hall, on Friday evening, 8th inst, the meeting was called to order, Thomas Lane in the Chair. The meeting being addressed by Mr. Taylor and others, it was therefore

RESOLVED—that we form ourselves into an association to be called The Manufacturers and Retailers Association and that a Committee of seven be appointed to draft by-laws for the same. Whereupon the following

gentlemen were chosen: David Feeks, Mathias Lockman, Nathan A. Rogers, William H. Lane, William Stokely, William Taylor and P. Snedecker.

2. RESOLVED, that we are determined not to submit to the coercive measures adopted by the journeymen—that while we are willing to pay a fair remuneration for labor, we declare ourselves free and independent to act for ourselves.

3. RESOLVED, that in the present state of our business affairs, that we act with unanimity and good faith towards each other.

4. RESOLVED, that we do not recognize the right of workmen to levy a list of wages upon us, for the support of the fund of the Trades Union, or to the fund of any individual trade society.

5. RESOLVED, that we will no longer be made submissive agents to carry out the purposes and designs of such regulations.

6. RESOLVED, that we take all fair and lawful means to oppose the same.

7. RESOLVED, that we cordially invite the employers on the men's branch to form a Society forthwith to unite with us maintaining our rights as good and free citizens, and to oppose every injurious combination connected with the Trades Union.

8. RESOLVED, that we cordially invite the employers in the different branches of the mechanic arts to hold meetings expressive of their views in relation to the oppressive operations and proceedings of the Trades Union, and such other matter as they shall deem expedient for their future welfare.

9. RESOLVED, that we deem it expedient to carry our object into effect, to call upon the different societies of employers to appoint delegates to hold a general con-

vention at such time and place as may be hereafter determined. . . [Forty signatures omitted.]

The first regular meeting of the Association will be held on Monday evening, 18th inst. at Congress Hall, corner of Bower and Hester-st.

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3. THE TAILORS' STRIKE OF 1836

(a) NOTICE TO TAILORS OF THE UNITED STATES

Evening Post, Feb. 8, 1836, p. 3, col. 1.

To JOURNEYMEN TAILORS—This is to inform Journeymen Tailors throughout the United States, that the regular men in the City of New York are on the strike against the employers, who have attempted to reduce their wages, more than a dollar on a Coat. The purport of this advertisement is to counteract the effects of the one published by the Merchant Tailors, who wish to bring men from distant places to render them subservient to their purposes.

The Boston *Palladium*, Philadelphia *Inquirer*, Baltimore *American*, Albany *Evening Journal*, New Haven *Palladium*, Hartford *Courant*, and Troy *Budget*, will publish the above twice a week for two weeks, and send their bills to the office of the *Courier & Enquirer*, New York.

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(b) RESOLUTIONS OF THE MASTER TAILORS

Morning Courier and New York Enquirer, March 9, 1836, p. 2, col. 5.

The *National Trades' Union*, March 26, 1836, p. 2, col. 3, stated that the employers had bound themselves "in the sum of one hundred dollars," not to pay anything over the new list of prices they had adopted.

The Society of Master Tailors in the city of New York having understood that some misapprehension exists in relation to their resolutions of the 9th inst., have deemed it necessary to set forth the grounds upon which said resolutions were adopted, and have accordingly unanimously passed the following preamble to said resolutions:

Whereas within the last two years a Society has been established in the city of New York, consisting of Jour-

neymen Tailors, called the Union Trade Society of Journeymen Tailors, for the avowed purpose of regulating the trade for the city of New York: and

Whereas certain of the regulations of said Society are subversive of the rights of individuals, detrimental to the public good, injurious to business, restrictive of our freedom of action, and unjust, and oppressive towards industrious journeymen, who are not members of the said society: therefore,

RESOLVED, that the members of this Society will not receive into their employ any man who is a member of the "Union Trades Society of Journeymen Tailors in the city of New York" and furthermore,

RESOLVED, that we will protect all men that are now, or may be hereafter in our employ. . . . 1975

(c) THE TRIAL FOR CONSPIRACY

(1) Appeal for Aid.

National Laborer, April 23, 1836, p. 19, col. 4, 5.

To the PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS of the Journeymen Tailors' Society of the City of Philadelphia.

Gentlemen: The circumstances under which we labor, render it imperatively necessary to make an appeal to our fellow tradesmen in particular, and mechanics in general, and make known to them the peculiar situation in which we are placed.

We have been on a stand out against a reduction of wages since the 23d of January last; the attempt by our would-be "Masters" to reduce our wages, commenced in the middle of an inclement and unusually tedious winter, when provisions, fuel, and every domestic requisite, rose to an unprecedented price hitherto unknown in the city of New York, and rents not only already high, but raising the coming year to an average of 20 per cent!

Such was the period chosen by our tyrant employers to attempt to crush us. Not satisfied with thinking to starve us into a compliance, they have brought to the aid of their unhallowed purpose, the petty minions of the law. Those minions, clothed with authority, have insulted and knocked down some of our members in the public streets, and dragged them like common felons to the police office.

To be brief—five and twenty of our members are arraigned and are to be tried on Friday next, for combination, conspiracy, and God knows what else !

During our present struggle, our finances have been munificently enriched by the liberal donations of the various trades of this city, as likewise by you, which we gratefully acknowledge. But, owing to the inclement season, the demand on our treasurer by our members, the price of innumerable advertisements and circulars to repel the foul misrepresentations of our tyrant “Masters,” the fees of lawyers, &c. have drained our treasury so low as needs this present appeal. We wish it to be understood, that almost every trade in this city are on the strike for an advance of wages (while we are only resisting a reduction) and although it is their wish to help us through our present difficulty, yet such is the demand on their own funds, that it cannot be reasonably expected they can assist farther than they have done, as yet. Fellow tradesmen, we are compelled again to appeal to you, and solicit contributions from you to enable us to meet our tyrant “masters” boldly at the coming trial, and, aware that you feel that our cause is your cause, we sanguinely submit it to your well known generous consideration.

In order that we might be the more substantially assisted, the committee have been directed by the so-

ciety to respectfully request you to submit our cause to the different Mechanics' Societies convenient to you, and to send your remittances as soon as possible.

Signed in behalf of the Society, M. FITZPATRICK, C. MICAIN, J. H. FARGIE, Corresponding Committee.

P.S. The Journeymen Tailors bill of indictment against the employers for combination, conspiracy, &c., was presented to the Grand Jury on Friday 8th inst., and, as was expected, ignored; consequently, rendering the Savage decision null and void!

- (2) The "Coffin Handbill," from the *Morning Courier and New York Enquirer*, June 8, 1836, p. 2, col. 1; quoted from the *Commercial Advertiser*, June 7, 1836.

The men were not sentenced until several days later, and the crowd which had assembled dispersed quietly. The Common Council offered a reward for the apprehension of the originator of this handbill.

JOURNEYMEN TAILORS. A placard was seen in various parts of the city on Sunday, which contained within the representation of a coffin, the following words:

"The Rich against the Poor! Judge Edwards, the tool of the Aristocracy, against the People! Mechanics and workingmen! a deadly blow has been struck at your Liberty! The prize for which your fathers fought has been robbed from you! The Freemen of the North are now on a level with the slaves of the South! with no other privileges than laboring that drones may fatten on your life-blood! Twenty of your brethren have been found guilty for presuming to resist a reduction of their wages! and Judge Edwards has charged an American jury, and agreeably to that charge, they have established the precedent, that workingmen have no right to regulate the price of labor! or, in other words, the Rich are the only judges of the wants of the Poor Man! On Monday, June 6, 1836, these Freemen are to receive their sentence, to gratify the hellish appe-

tites of the Aristocracy! On Monday, the Liberty of the Workingmen will be interred! Judge Edwards is to chant the Requiem! Go! Go! Go! every Freeman, every Workingman, and hear the hollow and the melancholy sound of the earth on the Coffin of Equality! Let the Court-room, the City-hall – yea, the whole Park, be filled with Mourners! But, remember, offer no violence to Judge Edwards! Bend meekly, and receive the chains wherewith you are to be bound! Keep the peace! Above all things keep the peace! . . .”

(3) Great Meeting in the Park.

National Laborer, June 18, 1836, p. 50, col. 3-6; quoted from the *New York Union*.

A VOICE FROM THE PEOPLE! Great Meeting in the Park!! New York.

Agreeably to public notice, the Mechanics and Working Men assembled in immense numbers in the Park, fronting the City Hall, on Monday afternoon, for the purpose of expressing their opinions of the high-handed measures taken by Judge Edwards to destroy the Rights of the producing classes.

The meeting was organized by the appointment of the following officers: Robert Townsend, Jr., *president*; *vice presidents* – Amos Waring, Hiram Tupper, Almon Roff, John W. Brown, Asa Howard, James Westwater, James Mills, James McBeath, Charles S. Wright, Barnes Bennett, Thomas J. Fisher, William Masterson, Robert Butcher, senr.; *secretaries* – Levi D. Slamm, Hugh Gallagher, Wm. L. Churchwell, Wm. Smith.

The following preamble and resolutions were then read by Mr. John H. Bowie, prefaced by some pertinent and eloquent remarks. The meeting was also eloquently addressed by Alexander Ming, Jr., and William Murphy, at considerable length, which was re-

ceived with loud and reiterated cheerings from the vast assemblage.

The resolutions were then adopted by acclamation, as follows:

Whereas the Mechanics and Workingmen of this city, cannot view the late attacks made upon their rights, by men in whose hands has been entrusted the administration of the laws, but with feelings of deep and heartfelt indignation; being fully of opinion that it is a concerted plan of the aristocracy to take from them that Liberty which was bequeathed to them, as a sacred inheritance by their revolutionary sires—an inheritance purchased by their blood, and consummated by their patriotism and wisdom; and, whereas, the recent conduct of Ogden Edwards, presiding judge at the trial of the Journeymen Tailors for Conspiracy (?) in the court of Oyer and Terminer, was manifestly partial and unjust, inasmuch as he would admit of no evidence on the part of the Workingmen to prove that the employing tailors, not them, were culpable—that they, if any, were the conspirators—that they, in a season noticed for its inclemency, conspired to reduce the wages of their workmen—and that such conspiracy was the cause of the stand out of the journeymen: thus, manifesting his well-known partiality for the Rich, and his notorious injustice to the Poor; and whereas, the charge as delivered to the jury, and the sentence as pronounced by him, to the convicted laborers, embodied distinctions and principles utterly at variance with the spirit and genius of our Republican government, assertions not justified by the evidence, and constructions of the laws distorted and tortured into such hideous form that they threaten tyranny to the people, and destruction to the State; thus grasping at authority that was never intended to be given him—making laws instead of declar-

ing them—and claiming to unite in his imbecile personage, not only judicial but legislative power! and whereas, when such innovations upon the Rights of the People are openly proclaimed from the bench—adopted by the aristocracy—swallowed by an “impartial jury!”—and hung o’er our heads as a “grim skeleton” to frighten us into a still deeper vortex of degradation, that we may become but mere tools to build up princely fortunes for men who grasp at all and produce nothing—it becomes us at such a time to speak in a voice that will admit of no doubt, no misgivings as to the course we are determined to pursue. We have before us an example worthy of imitation, that holy combination of that immortal band of Mechanics, who despite the injury inflicted upon “trade and commerce,” “conspired, confederated, and agreed,” and by overt acts did throw into Boston harbor the Tea that had branded upon it “Taxation without Representation.” This now is the substance of our grievances. We are taxed but not represented, our legislators, our judges, are men, whose situation in life, will not admit of sympathizing with the “back bone of the body politic.” Legislative combinations are yearly created that draw from the poor their very life blood; and when the producers of all the necessities and luxuries of life, are by combinations of Bankers, of Merchants, and dealers in all exchangeable commodities who operate upon the currency, and the prices of articles requisite for our very subsistence—compelled by actual want to act in defence, the hideous yells of wolves, “learned in legal lore,” are immediately heard; and the strong arm of tyranny and injustice is interposed to crush the toil worn laborer. And as our laws, by an insidious aristocracy, are so mystified that men of common understandings, cannot unravel them—construction is forced upon construction—mystification

is heaped upon mystification, and precedent furnished upon precedent, to show that what the people thought was liberty, bore not a semblance to its name. Therefore, in the name of liberty and equality, be it

RESOLVED, that to all acts of tyranny and injustice, resistance is just, and therefore necessary; and the vain declarations of the omnipotence of the decisions of Savage and Edwards, and the imperious doctrines of the necessity of absolute submission, is indeed impotent to men who feel that such acts are equally intolerable, whether they be exercised by domestic traitors or foreign foes!

RESOLVED, that the construction given to the law, in the case of the Journeymen Tailors, is not only ridiculous and weak in practice, but unjust in principle, and subversive of the rights and liberties of American citizens; and he who would so far forget his oath to administer the laws faithfully, as did Judge (?) Edwards in his charge to the jury, is no longer entitled to the confidence of the people, and as such should no longer be allowed to disgrace that bench, from which nought should emanate but common sense, honesty, and equal and impartial justice, as well to the murderer as to the honest citizen.

RESOLVED, that from the close alliance which we have witnessed between the leaders of the two great political parties of this State, to crush the laboring men, we are led to believe that our rights can at all times be best advanced and defended by such men as have shown by their acts that they have some sympathy for the rights and happiness of their more humble and oppressed fellow citizens. Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that viewing as we do our present grievances flowing from a partial administration of the laws engendered by unequal legislation, it becomes us to ar-

rest the evils proceeding therefrom, by the constitutional and safe antidote of the ballot box. Therefore,

RESOLVED, that this meeting recommend to our fellow mechanics and working men throughout the State, that a Convention be held at Utica, on the 15th day of September next, to take into consideration the propriety of forming a separate and distinct party, around which the laboring classes and their friends, can rally with confidence.

RESOLVED, that a Corresponding Committee be appointed by this meeting, to advise with our fellow mechanics in the different counties, consisting of the following persons: Robert Townsend, Junr., Levi D. Slamm, Hugh Gallagher, John H. Bowie, Isaac Odell, John B. Parks, Alexander Ming, Junr., F. Byrdsall, William Smith, John W. Brown, Wm. Boggs, James McBeath, Seth Clark, Robert Beaty, James A. Pyne, J. L. Stratton, Darius Darling, Charles A. Davis, Hiram Tupper, Robert Taylor.

RESOLVED, that the members of the Corresponding Committee be requested to meet on Wednesday evening next, to organize for business. . . .

VI

GENERAL
TRADES' UNION OF THE
CITY AND COUNTY OF PHILADELPHIA

INTRODUCTION

In Philadelphia the movement towards a union of trades appears to have begun among factory operatives, but was soon taken up by the mechanics. As a result, however, of this dual initiative, two separate trades' unions were organized in close succession. The first, which bore the ambitious name Trades' Union of Pennsylvania, was begun in August, 1833, held one convention in December and then disappeared. Its organization was undoubtedly due to two factors, first the pressure in the cotton industry due to the high price of cotton, and second the initiative of a few enterprising men, including William Gilmore and John Ferral [sometimes spelled Ferrall or Farrell], afterwards among the most prominent of the Philadelphia leaders.

The second, the Trades' Union of the City and County of Philadelphia, held its first convention in November, 1833, with William English, another of the great labor leaders of the period, as its secretary. The tailors, bookbinders, and cordwainers took the initiative, but by January they had been joined by twelve other societies, including the Schuylkill Falls and the Blockley and Haverford societies, both doubtless of factory operatives. It seems probable, therefore, that the convention of the state union had received little if any support outside of Philadelphia county and had decided to amalgamate with the city union. By March, 1834, the Trades' Union of the City and County of Philadelphia had delegates from seventeen societies, and it was said that several other trades were organizing

with a view to joining. And in 1836, the union was reported to be composed of about fifty societies, comprising more than 10,000 members.⁴⁵

A constitution was adopted and a paper called the *Trades' Union* was started early in 1834. The object from the beginning was evidently the support of strikes, for in the first constitution there was an article⁴⁶ almost precisely like Article XVI, Section 1, of the new constitution adopted in 1836, which is herewith presented. From the first the delegates were elected every six months, the number amounting in 1834 to about one hundred,⁴⁷ and in 1836 to about four hundred. Unfortunately, no record of the proceedings of the union during the first two years of its existence has been found, but in 1836 and the first part of 1837 the minutes of the meetings prove that it was a very active and a very powerful force in the industrial life of Philadelphia. During the whole of 1837 and 1838, and part of 1839, moreover, regular announcements of the meetings of the Trades' Union appeared in the *Public Ledger*, the last in the issue of April 6, 1839.

Throughout this movement the cordwainers⁴⁸ were perhaps most active and resolute, and it was this trade which began the series of strikes which amounted by June, 1835, to a general strike of the mechanics and even of the unskilled laborers of Philadelphia for a ten-hour day. The spark that kindled the fire, however, appears to have come from a circular issued by the mechanics of Boston.⁴⁹ During June and July, 1835, there

⁴⁵ *National Laborer*, Nov. 5, 1836. See also the discussion on the Trades' Union in the *Pennsylvanian*, March 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 23, and 30, 1836.

⁴⁶ *Pennsylvanian*, Feb. 1, 1834.

⁴⁷ *The Man*, Sept. 4, 1834, p. 1, col. 2. From the Philadelphia *Trades' Union*.

⁴⁸ For an account of the cordwainers' struggles, see Introduction to vol. iii.

⁴⁹ See vol. vi.

were strikes, or demands for ten hours accompanied by the threat of strikes, among the cordwainers (both branches), Schuylkill laborers, carpenters, bricklayers, plasterers, painters, carters, cigar-makers, saddlers and harness-makers, leather dressers, black and white smiths, plumbers, bookbinders, and other trades. The bakers joined in by demanding that Sunday work be abolished, and the clerks asked for early closing. Meanwhile the printers struck for higher piece-rate wages, evidently with a view to making it possible to shorten hours. Not only were meetings held of the individual trades, but general meetings of citizens were called which endorsed the movement. The strikes appear to have been won in all cases. The city council of Philadelphia, moreover, passed a ten-hour resolution for working men employed under its authority, and the Board of Commissioners of Southwark followed the example.

The price inflation of 1836 led to another series of strikes, this time for higher wages to meet the increased cost of living. A general meeting of mechanics and laborers was held, which was followed by meetings of each trade separately, at which wage scales were adopted, and demands made upon the employers. Among the most hotly contested of these strikes were those of the bookbinders, house carpenters and Schuylkill laborers, the latter of which led to the arrest and trial of some of the laborers for alleged riot, of which they were finally acquitted.

The bookbinders' strike was supported by assistance, "pecuniary, or otherwise," from the Trades' Unions of Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Baltimore, and the District of Columbia, and from twenty-one trade societies in Philadelphia, eight in New York, two in Boston, six in Baltimore and two in the city of Washing-

ton. They were aided also by the employing bookbinders of New York and Boston. The strike was won. The carpenters also won their strike for \$1.50 per day through the summer months, and the strike of the Schuylkill laborers, though only partially successful, owing to the introduction of laborers from other cities, attracted a great deal of attention and public sympathy.

Early in 1836, coöperation began to attract the attention of the Trades' Union and, after considerable discussion of the subject, a coöperative convention was held. Several trade societies established coöperative enterprises, among them the cabinet makers, the handloom weavers and, most prominent, perhaps, the Journeymen Cordwainers (Ladies' Branch).

Even the panic of 1837, though severely felt, failed to suppress entirely the energy of the Philadelphia working men, and late in 1838 a call was issued for a working men's convention, which was held during January and February, 1839. The Trades' Union was still in existence and there is reason to believe furnished the initiative for the convention. About eighty delegates were present at the first meeting,⁵⁰ and the convention finally passed resolutions recommending the formation of trade societies throughout the United States and also of a "literary and scientific institute for the diffusion of useful knowledge." Soon after the adjournment of this convention the Trades' Union of the City and County of Philadelphia disappeared from view.

⁵⁰ *Public Ledger*, Jan. 9, 1839, p. 2, col. 4.

I. THE TRADES' UNION OF PENNSYLVANIA

(a) BLOCKLEY MEETING

Pennsylvanian, Aug. 22, 1833, p. 2, col. 4. No account has been found of the previous agitation in Manayunk which evidently inspired the Blockley meeting.

BLOCKLEY MEETING. Resolutions passed at the meeting held 19th August, 1833.

1st. That the thanks of this meeting be given to Messrs. Ripka & Co. for awakening the workmen of Manayunk and its vicinity to a sense of their danger; and likewise for stirring in them a spirit to resist the efforts of such tyrants as would gladly rob the operative of his rights and privileges as citizens, as well as the common necessities of life.

2nd. That the thanks of the meeting be also given to the workmen of Manayunk, for assisting Messrs. Ripka in their undertaking.

3d. That the thanks of this meeting be given to those editors of the public press, who, in spite of the bribes of the rich, and support of the influential, have manfully and independently taken up the cause of the poor and laboring man.

4th. That this meeting do consider it expedient for the protection of honest employers and the working classes, that a permanent union be established amongst them.

5th. That this meeting do suggest to the Manayunk Committee, that Delegates be appointed to meet from their various neighborhoods, and regularly discuss whatever matters come before them concerning the interests of the working classes — time and place to be here-

after specified by the Manayunk Committee, as may be most convenient for the different parties.

6th. That this meeting do give thanks to the Manayunk Committee for their vigilance and exertions, and particularly for sending us such able Delegates to assist us in our common cause.

7th. That this meeting be adjourned until 6 o'clock on Saturday evening next.

JOSHUA BURTON, Chairman, pro tem.
Blockley, Aug. 19, 1833.

(b) THE WORKING PEOPLE OF MANAYUNK TO THE
PUBLIC

Pennsylvanian, Aug. 28, 1833, p. 2, col. 6. It is interesting to note that William Gilmore, who was president of the Manayunk Working People's Committee at the beginning of this movement, was a prominent member of the Workingmen's Convention at its end, in 1839.

FELLOW CITIZENS: Deeply impressed with a sense of our inability to combat single-handed the evils that now threaten us, and being fully convinced, that the future happiness of ourselves and families depend on our present exertions, we are, with reluctance, obliged to lay our grievances and petition before you, well knowing that we are appealing to an enlightened and generous public. We therefore submit the following, with all the candor of feeling with which the human mind is capable of expressing itself, and may you judge us according to our merits.

We are obliged by our employers to labor at this season of the year, from 5 o'clock in the morning until sunset, being fourteen hours and a half, with an intermission of half an hour for breakfast, and an hour for dinner, leaving thirteen hours of hard labor, at an unhealthy employment, where we never feel a refreshing breeze to cool us, overheated and suffocated as we are, and where we never behold the sun but through a

window, and an atmosphere thick with the dust and small particles of cotton, which we are constantly inhaling to the destruction of our health, our appetite, and strength.

Often do we feel ourselves so weak as to be scarcely able to perform our work, on account of the overstrained time we are obliged to labor through the long and sultry days of summer, in the impure and unwholesome air of the factories, and the little rest we receive during the night not being sufficient to recruit our exhausted physical energies, we return to our labor in the morning, as weary as when we left it; but nevertheless work we must, worn down and debilitated as we are, or our families would soon be in a starving condition, for our wages are barely sufficient to supply us with the necessities of life. We cannot provide against sickness or difficulties of any kind, by laying by a single dollar, for our present wants consume the little we receive, and when we are confined to a bed of sickness any length of time, we are plunged into the deepest distress, which often terminates in total ruin, poverty and pauperism.

Our expenses are perhaps greater than most other working people, because it requires the wages of all the family who are able to work, (save only one small girl to take care of the house and provide meals) to furnish absolute wants, consequently the females have no time either to make their own dresses or those of the children, but have of course to apply to trades for every article that is wanted.

"The laborer is worthy of his hire," is a maxim acknowledged to be true in theory by all, and yet how different is the practice. Are we not worthy of our hire? Most certainly we are, and yet our employers would wish to reduce our present wages twenty per cent! and tell us their reason for so doing is, that cot-

ton has risen in value, but is it not a necessary consequence of the rise of cotton that cotton goods will rise also; and what matters it to us what the price of cotton is, our wants are as great when cotton is dear as they are when it is cheap; if our employers make more profit on their goods at any one time than they do at others, they do not give us better wages, and is it justice that we should bear all the burthen and submit to a reduction of our wages? No, we could not consistently with our duty to ourselves and to each other, submit to it, and rivet our chains still closer! We have long suffered the evils of being divided in our sentiments, but the universal oppressions that we now all feel, have roused us to a sense of our oppressed condition, and we are now determined to be oppressed no longer! We know full well that the attempted reduction in our wages is but the forerunner of greater evils, and greater oppressions, which would terminate, if not resisted, in slavery.

When we look around us, and see the cheerful faces, the happy homes, and many comforts and conveniences of life, which others enjoy; we cannot but feel the disadvantages under which we labor, in our present reduced situation. Where is the man who would change situations with us, after viewing us, and the tyranny by which we are oppressed? There is not one! The hardy workman who labors upon the public roads, breathing the pure air of heaven and enjoying more perfect happiness and liberty than we do—would say, “Give me my sun burnt features, my health and strength, in preference to the pale cheek, the sunken eye, and emaciated form that manufacturers exhibit!”

The deplorable condition of the children working in the factories of England, has been represented in glowing colors, and their burthens alleviated—but what has been done for ours? Nothing! Although our children

are oppressed as much as those in the English factories, there has been but few to vindicate their rights, or redress their wrongs; but we hope that every good feeling person will assist us in relieving them of their present burthens.

They are obliged at a very early age to enter the factories, to contribute to the support of the family—by which means they are reared in total ignorance of the world, and the consequence of that ignorance, is the inculcation of immoral and oftentimes vicious habits, which terminates in the disgrace of many of them in public prisons. When on the other hand, if we were relieved of our present oppressions—a reasonable time for labor established, and wages adequate to our labors allowed us, we might then live comfortable, and place our children at some public school, where they might receive instruction sufficient to carry them with propriety through life. But situated as they are, and reared in ignorance, they are trampled upon by every ambitious knave who can boast of a long purse, and made the tools of political as well as avaricious men, who lord it over them as does the southern planter over his slaves!

The female part of the hands employed in the factories are subject to the same burthens that we are, without the least allowance made on the part of our employers, for their sex or age—they must labor as we do, and suffer as we do; and those of them who are grown to womanhood, can barely support themselves by their industry.

We have here drawn but a faint sketch of the oppressions we labor under, but we hope by this to induce the public to examine for themselves. It would be endless to point out in detail, all the injustice we suffer from an overbearing aristocracy, but all that we have here stated are facts which cannot be denied.

Adopted at meeting of the Manayunk Working People's Committee, Aug. 23d, 1833. WM. GILMORE, Pres.

Attest, WM. F. SMALL, Secretary.

P.S. We should like to hear from the different Trades Unions throughout the U. States, concerning their regulations, &c. . . .

(c) CALL FOR A CONVENTION

Pennsylvanian, Nov. 11, 1833, p. 3, col. 1.

TO FARMERS, MECHANICS AND LABORERS. A Convention of Representatives of the Farmers, Mechanics, and Working Men generally, of the State of Pennsylvania, will be held at the County Court-House, Corner of Sixth and Chestnut streets, Philadelphia, on Monday, the ninth of December next, at 10 o'clock, a.m. — at which Convention measures will be taken to secure to the people of this State a system of General Education — the ten hour system of labor — and wages adequate to the labor done.

All trades, callings, &c. are requested to organize themselves in the different sections of this State in which they reside, and send their delegates to the aforesaid Convention.

By order of the Select Committee.

WM. GILMORE, Pres't.

Attest; WM. F. SMALL, Sec'y of the existing Trades Union of Pennsylvania.

(d) PROCEEDINGS

Pennsylvanian, Dec. 24, 1833, p. 2, col. 6. The adjourned meeting was held on January 13, 1834, and adopted reports on the ten-hour system, adequate wages and "general information." It then adjourned to meet on the first Monday of the following September. (See *Pennsylvanian*, Jan. 15, 1834). Nothing further is known of the union.

TRADES UNION OF PENNSYLVANIA. The convention of delegates from the Farmers, Mechanics and Working-men generally, of the state of Pennsylvania, called by public notice, met at Military Hall, Philadelphia, (the county court-house being occupied,) on Monday the 9th of December, 1833, at 10 o'clock, a.m.

Mr. William Gilmore, the President of the Trades Union of Pennsylvania, upon taking the chair, said, that as there were several delegates present who were not fully acquainted with the nature and objects of the Union, he would briefly state, that the Union was formed on the ninth of September last at Manayunk, for the purpose of mutual support in endeavoring to meliorate the condition of the working classes in general, and was composed of delegates from Blockley, Gulf-mills, Brandywine, Pikecreek, Roseville, Haddington, Haverford, Norristown and Manayunk, chiefly manufacturing districts: and he hoped that the members of the Union would continue, while in the pursuit of its objects, to carefully avoid all political questions whatever, and also that being aware of the importance of their duties, and the responsibility of their stations, they would act accordingly.

Credentials were then received from the delegates from Germantown, and from the journeymen housecarpenters of Philadelphia.

Mr. Fell and another gentleman, members of the Typographical Association, rose and said, that they with

eight others had been elected delegates from their association to meet this convention, but through their mistaking this, the state convention, for that of the city and county of Philadelphia, they had dissolved their delegation by appointing three of their number to meet the city and county convention to-morrow the 10th instant, at 7 o'clock, p.m., and that therefore they could not act officially, but said they would as individual members lay the proceedings of this convention before their association.

On motion, the constitution of the Trades Union of Pennsylvania was read.

RESOLVED, that a committee of five be appointed to bring such business before the convention, as to them may seem most proper to be acted upon; the committee consisted of John Ferral, James M. Davis, Peter Crossbie, Wm. Gilmore, and Adam Warner. . . .

The committee appointed to bring business before the convention, reported as follows, viz: "The committee appointed for the purpose of bringing such business before this convention as may be beneficial to the working classes in general, most respectfully beg leave to report, that after mature deliberation they have come to the conclusion, that the most prominent objects to be recommended to this convention would be, the ten hours' system of labour—adequate wages—and general information on such subjects as may be most beneficial and useful to the working classes in general; therefore be it resolved, that a committee of three be appointed on each of the above subjects, with power to add to their number.

JOHN FERRAL, Chairman."

Which report was read and accepted.

The following persons were appointed committees on the subjects mentioned in the above report, viz:

George Shubert, Adam Warner, and William Smith, on the ten hours' system of labour. James M. Davis, John Ferral, and John Marshal, on wages. John McNab, John Ferral, and James M. Davis, on general information, on subjects useful and beneficial to the working classes in general.

On motion, resolved, that when we adjourn, we adjourn to meet at this place (Military Hall) on the second Monday in January next, at 10 o'clock a.m.

On motion, resolved, that the members of this convention be requested to suggest such matter as they may think interesting or beneficial to the convention.

Whereupon Messrs. Davis, Ferral, Warner, and Crosbie delivered very spirited addresses on the propriety and necessity of a union of efforts among the productive classes in order to obtain the ten hours' system, and to enjoy with their more wealthy neighbors an equal share of the produce of their labour, which constitutes the wealth of society.

RESOLVED, that a committee of three be appointed to wait upon the Mechanics' Union of the city and county of Philadelphia at their meeting to-morrow evening at 7 o'clock to suggest to them the propriety of uniting with us for the general weal of the Farmers, Mechanics, and other Workingmen of Pennsylvania. John Ferral, James M. Davis, and Evan Bailey were appointed on that committee.

RESOLVED, that the proceedings of this convention be published in all papers friendly to the cause in and out of this state. . . .

2. THE PHILADELPHIA TRADES UNION

(a) PRELIMINARY CONVENTION

Register of Pennsylvania, Nov. 30, 1833, vol. xii, 351. William English was the first Recording Secretary of the National Trades' Union.

MECHANICS UNION. Pursuant to an invitation given to the several Trade Societies of Philadelphia, to appoint three delegates, each to meet in convention for the purpose of considering the propriety of forming a general trade union—the Delegates representing the Tailors, Book-binders, Cordwainers' Societies, met at the Military Hall, Library street, on Thursday evening, the 14th inst. and organized by appointing Wm. C. Doores, Chairman, and Wm. English, Secretary.

The objects of the Convention being stated from the Chair, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted.

RESOLVED, that for the purpose of mutual protection it is essentially necessary to form a General Trade Union, on a similar basis to those already in existence in New York and Baltimore; and that the same be recommended to the immediate consideration of the respective trade societies.

RESOLVED, that the several Trade Societies now in existence, be respectfully requested to appoint three delegates to meet this Convention at its next meeting; and those trades not having societies be solicited to form themselves as soon as practicable, and appoint delegates to meet as above.

RESOLVED, that the Editors of this city be respectfully requested to publish the proceedings in their respective papers, until the Union is fairly organized; after which such favour will be freely paid for.

On motion, the Convention adjourned, to meet on Tuesday, the 26th inst. at 7½ o'clock, at the Military Hall, Library street.

(b) ADDRESS TO MECHANICS AND WORKING MEN

Pennsylvanian, Jan. 9, 1834, p. 2, col. 2.

AN ADDRESS to mechanics and Working Men, by the Trades Union of city and county of Philadelphia.

FELLOW CITIZENS: In addressing you upon the important subject of Trades' Society and Trades' Union, we will call you to a consideration of the dangers of disunion; and the benefits arising from the institution now forming for the maintenance of a fair price for labor. However great our present happiness and prosperity may be, it is prudent that we should guard against evils, from which we are not at any time secure. And as it is degrading, as well as distressing, to endure evils which we are able to remedy, we should employ those means within our power, to remove them, when they exist. There are many mechanics and working men in this city and county—and in every part of the United States, whose daily labor is not rewarded with a sum sufficient to supply their families with the common necessities of life. Distressing as this situation is, should their employers determine upon paying a sum still smaller, the workmen, on refusing to accept of it, would be thrown out of employment. Should they fail to procure work elsewhere, at the usual prices, they would be compelled by want, having no resources but their own, to return to their employers, and work for such prices as they might be disposed to give. To avert an evil so afflicting, and to which all workmen are liable, Trades Societies have been formed. But this remedy in many instances has failed. Men who had not received a sum sufficient to maintain their families,

could not lay by a fund that would enable them to stand out, any length of time against the oppression of their wealthy employers. That state of feebleness, therefore, that in the first case suggested a union of the members of a trade into Societies, suggests also, in the second, a union of the Trades Societies, which should be carried into effect throughout the United States. The rights of each individual would then be sustained by every working man in the country whose aggregate wealth and power would be able to resist the most formidable oppression. Nothing that has been done to improve the moral and physical condition of mankind has been attended with results more beneficial than those which would be produced by such an institution. Each individual would then receive a compensation that would enable him with economy, to provide a comfortable subsistence for his family; to give his children an education that would enable them to become useful and respectable members of the community—to provide against dull seasons and sickness, and lay by a fund that would support him when the infirmities of age should render him unable to work. That each individual who devotes almost every day of his life to toil, ought to receive such a compensation, no one can deny, but that thousands do not, is a lamentable fact. They who do, should be warned by the fate of others, whose fancied security has been their ruin. It is folly to conceal from ourselves the fact that, unless preventive measures are adopted, our prices of labor will ere long be insufficient to support us. There was a time when mechanics and working men in many parts of Europe, received a liberal pay for their work, but by neglecting to guard against that evil which has at length overwhelmed them, a gradual diminution of their wages has reduced them to a state of misery beyond concep-

tion. To such a pittance are many thousands stinted, that the moment sickness disables them to work, a scene of the most distressing misery commences. In addition to the afflictions of sickness, their feelings are lacerated by the wants of their suffering families, and they have, at length, to endure the mortification of receiving from the hands of charity, that sustenance which their labor should have afforded. Such dangers threaten us, and should we remain inactive, such misery will be ours. It is as degrading to endure evils which we are able to remedy, as it is honorable to prevent them. It is expected therefore that no respectable mechanic will stand aloof, when his own and the general welfare requires his aid. But if there are any who are not actuated by that American spirit which resists oppression, who could sacrifice the interests of a life-time to the ease of a moment, we leave them to sink into that degradation and misery, that their baseness and servility deserve. It now remains to assure our fellow citizens that this institution is what it purports to be. A union of mechanics and working men, for the advancement of their interests, individually and collectively, and is entirely distinct from, and unconnected with, any political part whatever.

WM. C. DOORES, President. — WM. ENGLISH, Sec'ry.

The following Trades and Societies are represented in the Union: Cordwainers, (men's branch) Tailors, Book Binders, House Carpenters, Brush Makers, Schuylkill Falls Society, Cordwainers, (ladies branch), Blockley and Haverford Society, House Painters, Tobaccoconists, Tortoise shell comb makers, Typographical Association, Moulders, Hatters, Stone cutters.

The Trades Union will meet at Anderson's, corner of Sixth and Carpenter streets, at 7¼ o'clock, on Tuesday next.

(c) THE CONSTITUTION

Constitution of the Trades' Union, of the City and County of Philadelphia. This was adopted in 1836, superseding an older constitution, and was published as a small leaflet, the only known copy of which is pasted on the inside cover of the file of the *National Laborer*, preserved at the Library of Congress.

CONSTITUTION OF THE TRADES' UNION, of the City and County of Philadelphia (as adopted).

ARTICLE I. *Title.* This Association shall be called the Trades' Union of the city and county of Philadelphia.

ARTICLE II. *Business.* The business shall be transacted by regularly appointed Delegates from each Trade Society, or Association belonging to the Union.

ARTICLE III. *Representation.* The number of Delegates appointed by each Society shall be in proportion to the number of members composing such Society, as follows: each Society, whose number of members do not exceed twenty, shall be represented by two Delegates, and every Society consisting of a larger number than twenty, shall add one Delegate for each additional fifteen members until the number amount to fifty, after which one Delegate shall be added for every additional twenty-five members.

ARTICLE IV. *Officers.* The officers of this Union shall consist of a President, Vice President, Recording and Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer, and a Treasury Committee of three, all of whom shall be elected by ballot semi-annually.

ARTICLE V. *Election of Delegates.* *Section 1st.* The election or appointment of Delegates by the Societies composing this Union, shall take place prior to the semi-annual meetings of March or September, as the case may be, at which time their term of service shall commence, which shall be six months. *Provided,* that nothing herein contained, shall prevent Societies from electing Delegates in the mean time to supply vacancies.

Section 2d. Every Delegate before entering upon his duties, shall subscribe to this Constitution.

ARTICLE VI. *Duties of the President.* *Section 1st.* It shall be the duty of the President to preside at all meetings of the Union, and preserve order in the transaction of business; he shall sign all orders given by the Union.

Section 2d. He shall call special meetings of the Union when requested by a majority of the Delegates of any three Societies represented.

ARTICLE VII. *Duties of the Vice President.* *Section 1st.* It shall be the duty of the Vice President, in the absence of the President, to preside at all meetings, and perform all duties belonging to that office.

Section 2d. He shall preside at all meetings of the Finance Committee, and preserve order in the transaction of business, but shall have no vote therein. He shall receive at each stated meeting of the committee, all moneys paid by the respective members, and pay the same to the Treasurer of the Union.

ARTICLE VIII. *Duties of the Recording Secretary.* *Section 1st.* The duty of the recording Secretary shall be to keep all books and papers appertaining to his office, which shall at all times be open for inspection by the Delegates. He shall keep correct minutes of all the proceedings of the Union, enter all receipts and expenditures, and countersign all orders that may be drawn upon the funds. He shall call special meetings when directed by the proper authority.

Section 2d. And it shall be his duty, in case of neglect or refusal of the President, to call special meetings when furnished with a written request, signed by a majority of the Delegates from any five represented Societies.

Section 3d. He shall keep a correct list of the names

and residences of all the Delegates, with the number of times each absents himself from the stated or special meetings.

Section 4th. At the expiration of his term of office, removal, or resignation, he shall when required, deliver to his successor in office, all books and effects which he may have in his possession belonging to the Union.

ARTICLE IX. *Duties of the Corresponding Secretary.*

Section 1st. It shall be the duty of the Corresponding Secretary to write all letters required by the Union, and upon the receipt of any letters or other communications, to lay the same before the next meeting.

Section 2d. In the absence of the Recording Secretary his duties for the time being shall devolve upon the Corresponding Secretary.

ARTICLE X. *Duties of the Treasurer. Section 1st.*

He shall hold in his possession a sum of money not exceeding fifty dollars, for the purpose of defraying the current expenses of the Union; but he shall make no disbursement unless authorized by a majority of the Delegates present, under an order from the President attested by the Secretary.

Section 2d. He shall attend all meetings of the Finance Committee, and shall receive all moneys collected at each meeting, and give a receipt therefor, and deducting the deficiency that shall make up the sum of fifty dollars in his hands, deposit the same in such place, and in such manner as the Union may direct.

Section 3d. He shall keep a correct account of all moneys by him received or paid, and his books shall be at all times open for the inspection of the Union, or a committee therefrom.

Section 4th. Before entering upon the duties of his office he shall give bonds for the faithful performance thereof to the President of the Union, in the name of

the Trades' Union of the city and county of Philadelphia, with such security as may be approved by the Union.

Section 5th. At the expiration of his term of office, removal, or resignation, he shall when required, deliver to his successor in office, all moneys and effects which he may have in his possession belonging to the Union.

ARTICLE XI. *Treasury Committee and Duty.* *Section 1st.* This committee shall consist of three Delegates, in whose names all moneys shall be deposited, and whose duty it shall be to sign all checks for the withdrawal of the funds or any part thereof, from the place of deposit, when required by the proper authority; but they shall not draw moneys, nor sign any checks therefor unless by authority from the Union, under an order from the President, attested by the Secretary.

Section 2d. No Delegate, except a member of the Finance Committee, shall be elected a member of the Treasury Committee.

ARTICLE XII. *Vacancies.* All vacancies that may occur in the offices of the Union, by removal, resignation or otherwise, shall be filled by a new election.

ARTICLE XIII. *Finance Committee.* *Section 1st.* The Finance Committee shall consist of one member from each Society represented, to be appointed or elected by such Society from the number of its Delegates, and no member of said committee shall be eligible to any office under this Constitution.

Section 2d. They shall each pay to the President of the Finance Committee, at their stated meetings, the amount due from their respective Societies.

Section 3d. They shall hold regular monthly meetings, one week previous to each stated meeting of the Union, and shall present a correct report of their pro-

ceedings, state of the funds, and the amount of moneys received from each Society.

Section 4th. It shall be their duty to examine the roll book of each Society represented, at least once in three months.

Section 5th. They shall enact all By-laws which they may deem necessary for their government, provided such By-laws shall not be contrary to the Constitution and By-laws of the Union.

ARTICLE XIV. *Monthly Dues.* [As amended May 7, 1836. See "Proceedings"] *Section 1st.* Every Society represented in this Union shall pay into the funds thereof at each stated meeting of the Finance Committee, the sum of six and a quarter cents for each of its members, and shall, on admission, pay one months dues in advance.

Section 2d. The funds of the Union, except such as are applied to defray the current expenses, shall be appropriated for the benefit of the respective Societies represented, as may be directed by the By-laws.

Section 3d. Any represented Society, neglecting to pay its quota for two successive months, shall be notified by the Secretary of the Finance Committee, and in case of neglect or refusal to pay at the next stated meeting, shall forfeit all claims to the Union, and can only be re-admitted upon the terms of a new Society.

Section 4th. All orders upon the funds shall emanate from the Union, agreeable to the Constitution and By-laws.

ARTICLE XV. *Books.* *Section 1st.* All books and Accounts of the Union shall at all times be open for the inspection of all or any Society represented.

Section 2d. In order to secure mutual confidence, between the various represented Societies, the Roll Book of each Society shall at all times be open for the

inspection of the Committee of Finance, at their stated meetings in January, April, July, and October.

ARTICLE XVI. *Aggression, Hours or Wages.* *Section 1st.* Any Society wishing to repel Aggression, or desirous of Striking for Hours or Wages, shall give written notice of the same, through their proper officers, to the President of the Union, who shall immediately direct the Secretary to call a special meeting, if no stated meeting should occur before said Special Meeting could be called, when the vote of two-thirds of the Societies present shall be requisite to the granting of pecuniary aid to any such represented Society.

Section 2d. No Society shall be entitled to pecuniary aid from the Union until it has been represented in the same for the space of six months, and complied with all other constitutional requisitions.

ARTICLE XVII. *Admission.* Any Society wishing to be represented in this Union, shall make application in writing to the President, who shall lay the same before the next meeting; an election shall then take place, and if a majority of Delegates present consent, said Society shall be entitled to a representation, and the Corresponding Secretary shall, within three days, present a written notice of the same to either the President or Secretary thereof.

ARTICLE XVIII. *Fraud and Expulsion.* Should any Delegate of a represented Society be proved guilty of defrauding the Union in any manner, or under any pretence whatever, he shall be expelled and not again admitted.

ARTICLE XIX. *Politics and Religion.* No party, political or religious question shall at any time be agitated in, or acted upon by this Union.

ARTICLE XX. *By-laws.* All By-laws, in order to be valid, shall be sanctioned by two-thirds of the Societies

present, except such as may be necessary to preserve order in the Union, which may be passed by a majority of the Delegates present.

ARTICLE XXI. *Alteration of Constitution.* Any alteration that may be required in this Constitution shall be presented in writing at a stated meeting of the Union, and shall lay over one month before it shall be acted upon; should it then receive a majority of the votes of the Delegates present, it shall be presented to each of the represented Societies, and in order to become valid shall receive the sanction of two-thirds of the same.

ARTICLE XXII. *Dissolution.* This Union shall not be dissolved, while five represented Societies are willing to continue it.

(d) ORGANIZATION

Pennsylvanian, March 13, 1834, p. 2, col. 6. The proceedings of a meeting held on March 11, 1834.

. . . Delegates from the following Societies and associations appeared and took their seats, viz:

United Beneficial Society of Journeymen Cordwainers (men's branch), Philadelphia Benevolent and Trade Society of Journeymen Tailors, Book Binders Trade Society, Union Beneficial Society of Journeymen Cordwainers, (ladies' branch), Journeymen Carpenters' Benevolent Association, Journeymen Brush makers' Society, Association of Journeymen Shell Comb makers, Blockley and Haverford Association, Journeymen Hatters' Association, Tobacconists' Trade Society, Typographical Association, Association of Moulders, Association of Journeymen Stone Cutters, Journeymen Umbrella makers' Society, Association of Leather Dressers, No. 1, Association of Leather Dressers, No. 2, Journeymen Saddle and Harness makers' Society.

After the credentials were read and acknowledged, an election took place, which resulted in the choice of

the following members, to-wit: *President*—Geo. R. McFarlane; *Vice President*—Benj. T. Sewell; *Recording Secretary*—Wm. English; *Corresponding Secretary*—E. Barrington; *Treasurer*—John Caney. . . .

It was stated to the chair that several societies were being organized with a view of joining the Trades' Union—it was, therefore, on motion resolved, that all trades be earnestly solicited to form themselves into societies, as soon as practicable, and that those trades, having societies, and not represented in the Union, be respectfully requested to take measures to have themselves represented as early as possible. . . .

(e) PROCEEDINGS, 1836-1837

Pennsylvanian, March 12, 1836, p. 3, col. 1. The earlier proceedings were doubtless published in the *Philadelphia Trades' Union* newspaper, which has disappeared.

Philadelphia, March 10, 1836. At an adjourned meeting of the Trades' Union, held last evening, it was unanimously resolved, that a further appropriation of \$1000 be granted to the Book Binders, and \$300 to the Hatters now on strike.

The committee appointed to receive appropriations for the Journeymen Tailors of New York now on strike are—Thomas Hogan, No. 37 N. Seventh street; Wm. Thompson, No. 297 S. Tenth street; Joseph D. Miller, No. 2 Randall's court, between 8th and 9th and between Walnut and Locust streets.

Published by order of the Union.

JOS. D. MILLER, Secretary.

National Laborer, April 9, 1836, p. 11, col. 5.

EXTRACTS from the Proceedings of the Trades' Union, March 30.

[March 30] . . . The Committee on the subject of the Leather Dressers reported progress, and asked leave to sit again; which was granted.

A communication from the Stone Cutters Society, accompanied with a voluntary donation of \$100, to the funds of the Union.

A communication from the House Painters Society accompanied with a voluntary donation of \$20, to the funds of the Union, was received, and the money paid to the President.

Mr. W. Thompson gave notice that he would propose an amendment to Article [XIV] of the Constitution, making the dues in future 10½ cents per month. Laid on the table till next stated meeting. . . .

On motion of J. Ferral, it was resolved, that in future the call for the main question shall be sustained by the representatives of twelve Societies rising in their places, and that the names of said societies be recorded on the minutes of the Union.

The committee on the procession reported in favour of its taking place on the day that the corner stone of the Hall shall be laid, and the committee recommend that it take place, if practicable, on the second Tuesday of June.

While the above resolution was under consideration, the hour to adjourn arrived, and the convention adjourned without coming to any conclusion.

Public Ledger, April 2, 1836, p. 3, col. 1.

Trades' Union, March 30. At an adjourned meeting, held on the above evening, it was resolved, that the sum of one thousand dollars be appropriated to sustain the Journeymen Cordwainers, on the Ladies' Branch, now on a strike—the resolution to be published in the daily papers.

National Laborer, April 16, 1836, p. 15, col. 1.

[April 12] . . . The Hatters of Germantown, and the Dyers of this city applied for admission to mem-

bership and were elected. But little business was transacted besides the receiving of dues and donations—as this generally occupies two or three hours. The Marble Laborers reported that they had resolved to pay for each member twelve and a half cents per week into the funds of the Union: and the Shell Comb Makers likewise ten cents per week.

Besides the monthly dues which were about seven hundred dollars, the following donations were received:

From the Book Binders . . .	\$300.00
“ Cotton Spinners . . .	50.00
“ Shell Comb Makers . . .	25.00
“ Hand Loom Weavers, No. 2 . . .	100.00
“ Brush Makers . . .	75.00
“ Whip and Cane Makers . . .	17.00
“ Saddlers and Harness Makers . . .	100.00
“ Iron Moulders . . .	10.00
“ Hand Loom Weavers, No. 1 . . .	150.00
“ Marble Laborers . . .	12.60
“ Individuals . . .	3.00
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National Laborer, April 16, 1836, p. 15, col. 3. (In this and following extracts from that journal, appears the heading, “Reported for the *National Laborer*.”)

[April 8] . . . After the call had been read and sanctioned by the Convention, credentials were received from the Marble Laborers, appointing James Gill a Delegate to the Convention—read and accepted. From the Hatters Association appointing John Simons a Delegate to the Convention—read and accepted.

A communication was received from the Hatters Association—read and accepted—withdrawing their members now on a strike, from the support of the Union, as they have come to the determination of supporting them themselves. Also, a voluntary donation of Fifty

Dollars, in aid of the general fund of the Union, presented by the said Association. A communication was read from the Bookbinders Association, accompanied by a voluntary donation of Fifty Dollars in aid of the general fund of the Union—accepted. A communication was read from the House Painters Society, accompanied by a voluntary donation of Thirty Dollars in aid of the general fund of the Union—accepted. A communication was read from the Shell Combmakers, accompanied by a voluntary donation of Fifty Dollars in aid of the general fund of the Union—accepted.

The credentials of Charles Boyle, from the Cotton Spinners, was read and accepted; and notice gave that Charles B. Garwood would act in future as the Finance Delegate of said Society.

On motion of John Crossin, it was resolved, that a committee of five be appointed to prepare a circular to the various Societies represented in the Union.

The Agent appointed at a previous meeting, submitted a report, which was received, and the recommendation concurred in.

On motion, it was resolved, that the Union approve of the articles that have lately appeared in the *Pennsylvanian* and *United States Gazette*, in defence of the Trades' Union, over the signature of "Sherman." A motion was made by John Ferral that a committee of three be appointed to have the articles of "Sherman" published in pamphlet form, which was, on motion, postponed till the next Stated Meeting.

On motion, it was resolved, that the sum of Five Hundred Dollars be appropriated to the aid of the Oak Coopers, now on a strike, which strike had been sanctioned by the Union some time back. On motion, it was resolved, that the sum of Three Hundred Dollars be appropriated in aid of the Leather Dressers, No. 2, now

on a strike, which strike had been sanctioned by the Union some time back. . . . J. CROSSIN, Ch'n.

National Laborer, April 23, 1836, p. 19, col. 4.

[April 20] . . . Communications were received from several Societies, accompanying donations to the Union, as follow:

From the Biscuit Bakers	\$12.00
Furriers	50.00
Hatters' Society of Germantown	8.00
Cordwainers of Germantown	5.25
Association of Journeymen Cabinet Makers of Philadelphia	42.00
Tailors	200.00
Cordwainers (Men's Branch)	100.00

The Hatters' Association communicated sundry resolutions, one of which was, that each and every member had agreed to pay weekly into the funds, 12½ cents.

The communication from the Taylors was accompanied by a letter from the Journeymen Taylors of New York, now on strike against a reduction of wages, which letter was ordered to be published. The Union was also informed that the Taylors of this city had appropriated \$500 to the Taylors of New York.

The Treasurer presented his monthly report, which was read and accepted. The Secretary reported that 1000 copies of the Report on Prison Labor were printed, and at the disposal of the Union.

On motion of Thomas Hogan it was resolved, that 900 copies of the Report be distributed among the different Societies in such proportion as they may agree upon, and that 3 cents for each copy be charged to the Societies who receive them. The remaining 100 to be reserved by the Union for the purpose of transmitting them to the Trades' Unions throughout the country. . . .

The Committee appointed at a previous meeting to investigate the Constitution of the Carpet and Ingrain Weavers Society reported favorable, and the Society was duly elected a member of the Union. . . .

On motion of William English, it was resolved, that a committee of five be appointed to confer with the committee of Cordwainers Ladies' Branch, Horn Comb Makers, and such other Societies now on a strike, as may appoint committees for that purpose, to report such resolutions as they may deem necessary, to the next meeting of the Union. . . .

On motion of William Thompson, it was resolved, that the Corresponding Secretary be authorized to subscribe for — copies of the *National Laborer*, to be forwarded, for 6 months, to the Corresponding Secretary of each Trades' Union in the United States.

On motion resolved, that the Financial Delegate of each society be requested to read to his society the letter of the Journeymen Tailors of New York, ordered to be published in the *National Laborer*, and report to the Union the action of his Society on the same. . . .

National Laborer, May 7, 1836, p. 27, col. 3.

[May 3] . . . Credentials were read and accepted from the Fairmount Trade Association, Brush Makers, Gilders, and Stone Cutters.

A resolution was presented to the Convention from the Hatters' Association, appropriating ten dollars for the relief of the Tailors of New York. A communication was received from the Stone Cutters, acquainting the Union with their determination to double their monthly contributions, which was also accompanied by a donation of \$100 to the General Union. They also informed the Union that the letter of the Journeymen Tailors of New York, and their case, was then under consideration.

The Committee appointed at a previous meeting of the Union to attend a meeting of Paper Makers at Mill Creek, above Manayunk, reported that they proceeded to the appointed place, accompanied by Messrs. English and Hogan, where they met an assemblage of individuals engaged in the manufacture of paper, who, after hearing addresses from several persons present, formed themselves into a Trade Society.

The Tin Plate and Sheet Iron Workers presented to the Union the sum of \$25. The Fairmount Trade Association reported that they had received from the members a voluntary contribution of twenty-eight dollars, which they appropriated to aid the General Fund. A communication was received from the Gilders Association, accompanied by a donation of \$21.69 cents to the Union, and informing the Union that they had resolved to double their monthly dues. The Cordwainers (Men's Branch) reported through their delegates that they had raised by weekly contributions the sum of \$61.18 which they presented to the Union. The Marble Laborers presented the sum of \$25.25.

The Hatters' Association called the attention of the Union to a circular explaining the causes of their late strike, which on motion was read, and ordered to be distributed to the various societies, through their Finance Committee. . .

A committee of three, consisting of Messrs. Scott, M'Calla, and English, was appointed to receive the Treasurer's bond.

The new constitution having been sanctioned by the requisite number of Societies, it became a law that the dues to the Union should be paid to the Finance Committee, and not to the Convention, as has heretofore been the case; the committee was instructed to retire and receive the dues from such societies as were ready to

pay, and to hold an adjourned meeting to receive the balance. A donation of sixteen dollars was received from the Horn Comb Makers.

On motion of John Caney, it was resolved, that each Finance delegate be instructed to inform the Union how many copies of the Constitution the society he represents will subscribe for, to be paid for in proportion to the cost.

The following resolutions were offered by Mr. Fitman, from the Saddlers and Harness Makers' Society, and at his request ordered to be published in the *National Laborer*: Resolved, that from and after the — day of —, it shall be the duty of the Finance Secretary to furnish the President of each society represented in this Convention with a detailed report (at the end of monthly intervals, commencing from the above time and date) of all the receipts and disbursements of moneys, accruing during the month previous to the time when such report shall be made.

And be it further resolved, that it shall be the duty of the aforesaid Secretary to file all certificates presented by mechanics entitled to weekly support or otherwise, and shall be returned, together with the monthly report, to the President of such societies from whom they emanated, regularly endorsed in the following terms, to wit: paid A B — dollars — cents, and signed by the Secretary, with the time and date thereof.

And be it further resolved, that it shall be the duty of the Financial Delegate of each society represented in this convention, to keep transcripts of the same. . .

JOSEPH D. MILLER, Secretary.

National Laborer, May 14, 1836, p. 31, col. 3, 4.

[May 10] . . . The credentials of delegates were read and accepted from the Hand-loom Weavers, No.

1, Chair Makers, Manayunk Trade Society, and Leather Dressers, No. 1 and 2.

The bond given by the Treasurer was read and approved, and the Treasurer presented his monthly report, which was read and accepted. . . .

John Ferral read a letter from Steubenville, Ohio.

An amendment to the constitution, changing the amount of dues from six and a quarter cents, to ten and a half cents per month, which had been proposed at a previous stated meeting, was taken up and adopted, and ordered to be laid before the societies for their approval.

Mr. Batson communicated to the Union information to the convention relative to the situation of some of the members of the Plasterers Society, upon which it was resolved that a committee of five be appointed to confer with the delegates from that society, who were instructed to report forthwith.

A letter was read from John Thompson, a representative of Philadelphia county, in the State Legislature, in answer to a communication from the Trades' Union, and the correspondence ordered to be published in the *National Laborer*, *Pennsylvanian*, and *Public Ledger*.

The Day Laborers presented a communication to the convention, expressing a wish to better the condition of their business, and asking the mechanics in the Trades' Union to grant them all the aid in their power under the present circumstances, after which it was resolved that a committee of one from each society, connected with building, be appointed to confer with the representatives of the Day Laborers' Society, and report forthwith.

Wm. Thompson, after some eloquent remarks, offered the following resolutions: that the Union take measures to establish a Trades' Union Savings and Co-oper-

ative Loan Fund. That a committee of nine be appointed to prepare laws and regulations for the government of the fund, and that the committee frame the rules with a special view to facilitate the Co-operative System.

On motion, these resolutions were unanimously adopted, and the following persons appointed a committee to carry the resolutions into effect; Wm. Thompson, John Ferral, Wm. English, Thomas Hogan, John Crossin, I. A. Stevens, S. C. Thompson, Patrick Carrol, and Thomas O'Neil. The Committee will meet on Tuesday evening, at Military Hall.

The Secretary offered a resolution requesting investigation into some charges made against him, which was agreed to, and the following persons appointed a committee for the purpose; I. A. Stevens, Daniel M'Cracken, and ——— Wilson.

On motion of S. C. Thompson, it was resolved, that in accordance with a recommendation from the National Trades' Union, a travelling agent be elected by the convention.

Peter Collins offered his resignation as one of the auditing committee, which was not accepted, but Messrs. Fitman and Simpson were added to the Committee.

On motion it was resolved, that the article in the new constitution relative to the Finance Committee, be published in the *National Laborer*. The following is the article. [Art. XIV of the Constitution as given above.]

On motion, it was resolved, that the election of agent be made a special business for the next meeting, and that the corresponding secretary be instructed to prepare an answer to a letter from Brandywine, requesting information on the subject of Trades' Unions.

The Finance Committee presented a detailed report of receipts and expenditures, which was accepted.

The Committee appointed to confer with the Plasterers, made a report, accompanied by resolutions on the case, which were adopted. . .

National Laborer, May 21, 1836, p. 35, col. 3.

[May 14] . . . Previous to the commencement of business, the Secretary was exonerated from charges made against him at a previous meeting, and on motion, the committee appointed to investigate the matter was discharged.

The Schuylkill Laborers applied for admission into the Union, when a committee of five was appointed to examine their constitution and qualifications.

The subject of appointing an agent was then taken up, and the convention proceeded to nominate candidates for the situation, when, after numerous declinations, the following persons were placed in nomination, Wm. Thompson, E. A. Penniman, John Crossin, P. Carrol, and Henry Scott.

The Committee on the admission of the Schuylkill Laborers, reported favorable to their application; whereupon they were elected, and the credentials of their delegates read and accepted.

The discussion was then resumed on the election of an agent, which, after being protracted for some time, was postponed till next stated meeting.

The resolution requiring two months' dues from the Societies, was, after considerable discussion, unanimously adopted.

The Day Laborers presented, through their delegates, information that a number of their members had been arrested, for no other cause than trying honestly to obtain an advance of wages, and daring to appear in the streets in procession.

A resolution was presented, authorizing a committee to procure counsel for the Laborers, and that the Union

hold an adjourned meeting on Wednesday evening next, which produced some animated and spirited remarks, which continued till the hour for adjournment arrived, when the rule was suspended for half an hour, and the resolutions were adopted.

The Chairmakers stated that their members were now on strike, and asked for the aid of the Union; stating, also, that reports were in circulation that they were not members of the Union, whereupon a preamble and resolution was adopted, certifying that they were fully entitled to support from the Union, and ordered to be published.⁵¹ . . .

National Laborer, May 28, 1836, p. 39, col. 2.

[May 21] . . . The resolution proposing a town meeting was postponed till Friday evening, 27th inst.

The Bookbinders Society reported that the amendment to the constitution, raising the dues from six and a quarter, to ten and a half cents per month, was agreed to. The Typographical Association reported likewise. . . .

A number of societies reported that they had resolved to pay into the general fund two months' dues.

The report of the Committee on the case of the Leather Dressers, was read and accepted—the report recommended a co-operation between the two Societies, Nos. 1 and 2. Some resolutions attached to the report, recommending that no member should work in a shop or board with those who did not receive the wages were lost.

National Laborer, June 4, 1836, p. 43, col. 2.

[May 27] . . . A donation of four dollars was received from the Journeymen Cabinet Makers' Society, for the Journeymen Tailors of New York.

⁵¹ This preamble and resolution may be found in the *Pennsylvanian*, May 19, 1836, p. 2, col. 7.—Eds.

The Corresponding Secretary read letters from the Unions of Baltimore, Troy, and Louisville, with his answers, which were approved. Documents from the Union Agency were also read, which elicited considerable discussion, but no disposition was made, and further consideration was indefinitely postponed.

The proceedings of the N.Y. Trades' Union in relation to the Leather Dressers of that city, were read, and on motion accepted, and a recommendation to the Leather Dressers Societies, Nos. 1 and 2, of this city, to take the subject of the above proceedings into consideration.

The Millwrights and Machinists reported that they had appropriated a donation of \$15 to the funds of the Union, and that they will continue to pay double dues.

The By-laws were then taken up, and the discussion commenced on the first article, before the adoption of which the convention adjourned.

National Laborer, June 11, 1836, p. 47, col. 2.

Friday, June 3. An application from the Horse Shoers was presented for admission into the Union, which was accepted, and a motion made to refer their constitution to a special meeting. Some objections having been made by the Blacksmiths to the resolution, a motion was made to postpone the subject, which after much discussion was withdrawn in favor of a resolution to appoint a committee to ascertain if a reconciliation could be effected between the two societies, which was adopted, and a committee of five appointed. The Society of Paper Makers, upon application were duly elected.

A resolution was then offered to appoint a committee to send a letter of condolence to the journeymen Tailors of New York, which was amended to instructions

to prepare a preamble and resolutions expressive of the feelings of the Union on their unjust conviction.

Wednesday, June 8. The credentials from the Biscuit Bakers read and accepted.

The committee appointed to prepare resolutions expressive of the sense of the Union on the verdict of the court upon the case of the journeymen Tailors, presented a preamble and resolutions, which were accepted, and ordered to be published in the *Public Ledger, Pennsylvanian, National Laborer, Pennsylvania Inquirer, and Philadelphia Evening Post*.

Feeling a deep interest in the welfare and happiness of our brethren in every clime, and more particularly for those in New York, whose prosperity is so closely linked with ours, we deem it due to the justness of the cause in which we are all engaged, to express our feelings and opinions upon the iniquitous result of the recent trial of the Journeymen Tailors of New York.

Regarding law when founded on justice, and framed and administered by the people, as essential to the interests of all Governments, we would most willingly lend our aid in all cases to its rigid enforcement. But it is with much grief that we have witnessed its frequent and shameful mal-administration within a short time past; we have seen in this and other States, Journeymen mechanics indicted, tried and imprisoned for combining to protect their interests, while capitalists, for infinitely worse combinations, have not only escaped the censure of the law, but have been held up as public benefactors.

We have seen a bill of indictment against the employing Tailors for conspiring to reduce the wages of the Journeymen, ignored by the Grand Jury, though themselves had published to the world the evidence of their conspiracy; two of these employers being members of

that Grand Jury, and sitting as judges of their own conduct! We now see those Journeymen who had been indicted by that same Grand Jury, tried and convicted for combining to prevent a reduction of their wages, and to protect themselves against the destructive effect of the unholy conspiracy of those very employers.

It is with painful solicitude that we have watched the rapid advance of inequality in our beloved country, and while we remember that foreign tyranny found a limit in 1776, we yet hope that domestic oppression may find a stern and as successful a foe in the strong union of the Working Men, and for the further expression of our opinions, we hereby publish the following resolutions:

RESOLVED, as the opinion of this meeting, that a crisis has arrived in which the Workingmen must either tamely yield their dearest rights to the influence of a moneyed aristocracy, or declare at once, and firmly, that they will suffer no longer the thralldom which partial legislation has imposed upon them.

RESOLVED, that we believe the suit against the Journeymen Tailors of New York, to have been instituted not for the purposes of justice, or in consequence of any injury they had done to the community, but to gratify the malignity of the employers who had been thwarted in their schemes of oppression by the steadfast resistance of the Journeymen.

RESOLVED, that we look upon the plot of the police officer, Bowman, and his coadjutors, to entrap the Journeymen into an act which might give a shadow for their arrest, as a foul and disgraceful conspiracy against the public peace and the rights of the citizens—as a devilish effort to reduce men into error, that their malicious persecutors might enjoy the delight their sufferings would give, and an act for which the severest lash of justice should be procured to protect the people in

future from the insidious plots of such sinister scoundrels.

RESOLVED, that we see in the despotic doctrines avowed in the decision of Judge Savage, a flagrant attempt to transfer the liberties of the people into the hands of a moneyed aristocracy, to establish a tyranny worse than feudal bondage, to create a privileged class invested with arbitrary power in our republic, and to spur on the fiend avarice to trample upon the liberty and prosperity of the productive labourer.

RESOLVED, that we view the charge of Edwards to the Jury, as equal in arrogance and knavery to that of Savage, as a palpable and wilful distortion of law, and a wicked violation of justice, and an impertinent dictation to the jury to follow blindly the mandates of Judge Savage, even if contrary to their own judgment.

RESOLVED, that it is with sorrow and indignation that we see the jury surrendering their own right of decision, and adopting at the bidding of the Judge the aristocratical and sophistical construction of the law by Judge Savage.

RESOLVED, that we tender our sympathy to the Journeymen Tailors who have been convicted of hostility to oppression and injustice, and who have fallen victims to the machinations of avarice and aristocracy, and we hail them as martyrs in the cause of liberty.

The corresponding secretary read the letters which he had received and written, which were cheerfully and enthusiastically approved.

Preamble and resolutions were presented respecting the Strike of the Ladies' Cordwainers, which were adopted, and a committee appointed to convey them to the above society.

Whereas, the Journeymen Cordwainers, (Ladies'

Branch) have been on a strike for a trifling advance in their wages, for the last eleven weeks; and the justness of their demand having been made manifest to the general Trades' Union, and brought the funds of that institution to their aid, it now becomes the bounden duty of the Trades' Union, in order to refute the false statements made in relation to said strike, which is now so near its accomplishment, to give the causes which induced the strike, and show the means resorted to by many of the employers to defeat the just demands of the journeymen.

It was made apparent to the Union that the average wages of the Journeymen Cordwainers, (Ladies' Branch) did not, previous to the strike, amount to more than five dollars and fifty cents, or six dollars per week, and that this sum, at the past or present state of the markets, is not sufficient to afford even the necessities of life, the public need not now be informed.

The average increase demanded, did not exceed seventy-five cents per week, which need not have added more than from six and a quarter to ten cents per pair in the price of the shoes. The employers, in their printed resolves, stated that the wages of the journeymen were fully ample to their support, and although they did not state the amount earned by the journeymen, they insinuated that it was much greater than in reality it was. The journeymen were willing to test the veracity of the employers by facts, and to this end desired that the books of any establishment, wherein ten or more men were employed, should be given to the inspection of disinterested persons, and if upon examination it could be proven that they had averaged seven dollars per week, they would abandon the strike, and resume their work at the old wages. This challenge, for the best of reasons,

was never accepted by the employers, but they still continued in the old system of abuse and misrepresentation.

It has also been shown that some of the employers (one in particular, and the most unrelenting tyrant) have in the course of seven years, since they were on the seat as journeymen, amassed fortunes to the amount of from fifteen to twenty thousand dollars, and yet they have the bare faced effrontery to assert that the profits of the business will not afford a better compensation to the workmen. The wealthiest of these employers, besides wielding their own capital to oppress the journeymen, have made strenuous efforts to enlist the opposition of all the small dealers in the Trade. They have proposed forfeitures of large sums of money to any who should first acknowledge the demands of their men. They have threatened and intimidated some who were willing to give the wages, from doing so. They have colligated with the buyers and sellers in Market street, and elsewhere, and influenced them to purchase no work from any employer who would give the wages demanded—have colligated with curriers, morocco dressers, and dry goods dealers, to injure the credit and standing of any who should thus accede to the demands of the journeymen. All this they have done, and yet, to the public, they complain of coercive measures being resorted to by the journeymen. They have boasted that they could sink thousands of dollars to defeat the journeymen, and yet be the gainers in a few years, if in three months they could conquer. They have spent large sums of money in travelling the eastern and other states to purchase goods which doubtless will be sold as Philadelphia manufacture. They have made fruitless efforts to enlist the co-operation of the employers of New York, Newark, Baltimore, &c., in their heart-

less crusade against the rights of the workmen—fruitless, because the employers of those places were and are paying from six to ten per cent. more to their journeymen than is demanded in this city. Persecution the most bitter and unrelenting has been visited upon the journeymen, and upon those of the employers who were willing to give the wages demanded, they being compelled to discharge their men at present, in order to secure a market for their work in future. Under all these circumstances, it becomes the duty of the Union to express its sentiments, on the premises, and more particularly so as a report has been industriously circulated that the Union has ceased to support the members now on strike, in consequence of which the employers have laid the flattering unction to their souls that they will within a week conquer the journeymen.

And whereas, the Cordwainers, Ladies' Branch, have instituted a manufactory of their own at Nos. 40 West and 41 East avenue, Arcade, which only wants to be known to be fully appreciated by the public, and to secure to those working therefor an adequate compensation for their labor, and as the expression of the sentiments of this Union may in some measure tend to benefit that institution, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that while the Trades' Union deprecates the necessity of appearing before the public as the champion of its members, being at all times more anxious to officiate as a peaceable negotiator than as a combatant, it will never permit its members to be sacrificed at the altar of avarice and oppression.

RESOLVED, that we deeply sympathize with the Journeymen Cordwainers, Ladies' Branch, and regret that avarice and extortion should have taken such deep root in the hearts of those employers, who still refuse to reward their honest toil, as to render such a protracted

strike necessary. But we conjure them to persevere in the noble stand they have taken, assuring them of the deep and abiding interest the Union has in their success, and of the support, pecuniary and otherwise, which it is at all times ready and willing to extend to its members.

RESOLVED, that the co-operation society recently established by the Cordwainers, Ladies' Branch, and the store which they have opened at No. 40 Arcade, is a striking evidence that they have become acquainted with the only means of securing a just reward for their labor, and that this Union cheerfully recommends said establishment to the patronage of all connected with or interested in the advancement of those who earn their bread in the sweat of their brow, and particularly to those females who desire to see their husbands and brothers obtain sufficient wages to keep the female part of their families from the drudgery of factories, workshops, and all other contaminating and debasing female employments.

RESOLVED, that the proceedings be published and sent to all places in the country where Trades' Unions or Trades' Societies exist, with a request for all papers friendly to the rights of mechanics, to copy the same, and that the Journeymen Ladies' Cordwainers, throughout the country, be requested not to visit this city until the strike is entirely ended, and they are advised of the same by this Union.

The Day Laborers presented resolutions asking the Union to recommend the various societies to aid them in their efforts to repel aggression, which were concurred in. . . .

National Laborer, June 18, 1836, p. 51, col. 3, 4.

[June 15] . . . Credentials were read and ac-

cepted from the Oak Coopers, Cedar Coopers, and others.

The Cabinet Makers reported that they had raised their monthly dues, and appointed 2 commissioners for the sale of stock in the Trades' Union Hall. The Carpet Weavers presented a donation of \$15.00 to the funds of the Union, and reported that they had adopted the amendments to the Constitution raising the dues. The Hatters' Society presented credentials for two delegates, which were accepted.

The Secretary, after remarking that there was a mistake in the report of the Finance Committee, read the minutes of the meetings held since last stated meeting, which, after some corrections, were accepted.

Credentials were read and accepted from the Coach Makers, Trimmers and Painters, and a report read that the Society had agreed to take 100 copies of the Constitution, had adopted the amendment to the Constitution raising the dues, had agreed to the 2 cents tax, and in addition, presented to the Union the sum of fifty dollars. Credentials from the Paper Makers were read and accepted.

The Secretary of the Finance Committee made a report which was accepted. The Treasurer's report was read and accepted.

The Dyers' Association presented a donation of \$14.50 to the funds of the Union.

The Committee appointed to propose a plan for establishing co-operation, reported progress, and were continued. The Committee on the application of the Horse Shoers for admission into the Union, reported progress, and were also continued. . . .

National Laborer, June 25, 1836, p. 55, col. 3.

[Saturday, June 18] The Paper Makers applied to

the Union for advice respecting their proposition to procure an advance of their prices, for which purpose a committee of five was appointed. . .

The report of the committee on the present condition of the Laborers was called for, and it being ascertained that the chairman was absent the remaining members of the committee were instructed to retire and prepare a report.

The committee appointed on the case of the Paper Makers read a report which was accepted, and the following resolution adopted: that it be recommended to the different Societies composing the Union, to aid the Paper Makers in their efforts to better the condition of their trade.

The Corresponding Secretary reported that he had received letters from Albany, Cincinnati, and Pine Grove. From the letter from Pine Grove it was learnt that the Weavers and Spinners had thought proper to separate, and contemplated the formation of a Trades' Union, for which purpose they requested an agent to be appointed by the Philadelphia Union to visit the place—whereupon it was resolved by the Union that an agent be elected for that purpose. It was then resolved, that the convention proceed to ballot for the agent, Messrs. Wm. Thompson and E. A. Penniman were nominated, and the election proceeded, at the close of which the judges reported. The judges of the election reported that it had resulted in the choice of Wm. Thompson. On motion, the agent elect was instructed to proceed as soon as possible to Pine Grove.

The proposal of a Town Meeting was then taken up, and a motion was made that it be held on the 4th of July, when after some discussion the subject was postponed. . .

Tuesday night, [June 21]. The subject before the

Union was the revision of the By-laws, which occupied the greater portion of the evening. The Auditing committee reported the state of the Finances, and Receipts and Expenditures for the last session. A committee of seven was appointed to prepare a plan for the better arrangement of the Financial department of the Union.

National Laborer, July 2, 1836, p. 59, col. 2.

[June 28] . . . Credentials from the Painters, Hand Loom Weavers, No. 1, and the Brush Makers, were read and accepted.

A communication was read from the Blacksmiths, asking the sanction of the Union to an effort on their part to procure a small addition to the price of their labor, which was referred to a committee of five, who, after due consideration, made the following report: That they had examined into the case of the Black and White Smiths, and respectfully reported, that in their opinion the contemplated Strike was just, and that the different Societies be recommended to give their assistance to the Blacksmiths.

The Hand Loom Weavers, No. 1, presented a communication complaining of difficulties existing between them and No. 2, and appealing to the Union for redress, which was referred to a committee of five.

The Finance committee presented a report fixing a salary for their Recording Secretary, which was adopted.

The committee to whom was referred the application of the Horse Shoers, for admission into the Union, made two different reports, a majority and a minority, both lengthy, and giving rise to considerable debate, which resulted in a motion to make the subject the special business of the next stated meeting.

A bill for printing was ordered to be paid.

The committee appointed to investigate the subject of the difference between the Hand Loom Weavers, No.

1, and 2, reported the following resolution: that the Convention recommend a committee of five from each Society for the purpose of arranging their difficulties amicably in such manner as will eventually subserve the interests of both. An amendment to the above was made, that a committee of five be appointed to act in conjunction with the committees from their two Societies, and unanimously adopted, after which the resolution as amended was adopted.

The Typographical Association reported that the amendment to the Constitution requiring ten and a half cents per month was adopted; that it had resolved to take 100 copies of the amended Constitution, and the Pressmen's Association was now united with the Typographical Association, and that the latter body now embraced both branches of the Printing business. . . .

National Laborer, July 9, 1836, p. 63, col. 2.

[July 6] . . . Credentials were read and accepted from the Cabinet Makers. The Hatters Association presented a Communication, with a resolution that they had appropriated ten dollars to aid the fund of the Union.

It was then resolved, that the two reports from the committee to whom was referred the application of the Horse Shoers, be read, which was accordingly done. After which, a third report was read and accepted. The report of the majority of the above committee was then taken up, and a motion made that the resolutions appended thereto, be adopted. A discussion arose, which resulted in a motion to postpone the resolutions for the purpose of taking up the resolution attached to the third report, which was negatived. The President then called Wm. Thompson to the chair, and the discussion was resumed, which lasted till the hour arrived for adjournment, when on motion the rules were suspended for

half an hour, the whole of which time was spent, and the Union adjourned without coming to a decision.

National Laborer, July 23, 1836, p. 71, col. 2.

[July 20] . . . A quorum being present, the President read a communication from the Soap Boilers and Tallow Chandlers Society, praying for admission into the Union, communication accepted, and a committee of inquiry appointed who reported in favor of admission, whereupon the Society was elected, and the delegates requested to sign the Constitution, and take their seats as members.

The Agent appointed at a previous meeting, Mr. Wm. Thompson, presented a report of the proceedings of his mission in relation to the establishment of a branch of the Union at Chester Creek, when the report and resolutions were accepted, and the Chester Creek Trade Association was declared a legal member of the Union.

Mr. Thompson, from the Committee appointed to settle the difficulties between the Societies of Hand Loom Weavers, No. 1 and 2, presented a very favorable report, which was received with acclamation.

The President, as Chairman of the Prosecuting Committee in the case of the four Plaisterers and Schuylkill Laborers, reported progress, as no definite action had been taken on the Laborers, but that the Plaisterers had stood trial in the Mayor's Court, and were fully acquitted, which communication was enthusiastically received.

The following was offered by J. Crossin: Resolved, that a Committee of five be appointed to prepare a petition to the Legislature, asking for the passage of a definite law in relation to combinations and conspiracies, so far as relates to the operations of Mechanics in regard to their wages or hours of labor.

The Finance Committee presented a report, which was accepted, and an appropriation of fifty dollars made for the prosecuted Plaisterers. The current bills of the month were then presented, passed, and ordered to the Finance Committee for payment.

The report of the majority of the Committee on the case of the Horse Shoers being in order, Mr. Crossin having the floor, occupied it for a few minutes to make some explanatory remarks, and then asked leave to withdraw the petition, which was granted.

The Corresponding Secretary read various letters from Harrisburgh, Troy, and Albany, which were accepted—when his resignation was tendered and accepted. The Convention then went into a nomination for candidates to supply the vacancy, which resulted in the nomination of S. C. Thompson, Isaac Stephens, and Thomas Fitnam. The Judges having been appointed, reported, after an adjournment of ten minutes, that Samuel C. Thompson was duly elected Corresponding Secretary of the Union, which report was accepted. A resolution was then offered by J. Crossin to attach a certain sum to the office of Corresponding Secretary when in the discharge of his duty, which was passed unanimously.

A communication from the Paper Makers of Lower Merion, was received and accepted, asking of the different Societies contributory assistance.

Mr. Caney offered preamble and resolutions calling upon the different Societies to re-appoint Commissioners for the erection of a Hall, the Commissioners to meet on the first Monday in August, to make preparatory arrangements. . . .

At an adjourned meeting, held on the 20 inst. the following preamble and resolutions were adopted, and ordered to be published in the *National Laborer*.

Whereas, in consequence of the very insecure tenure by which this Union now holds its meetings, having no place over which it can exercise exclusive jurisdiction, therefore,

RESOLVED, that this Union recommend to the different Societies of which it is composed, to select two Commissioners, to form a Board, for the purpose of taking speedy measures for the erection of a Trades' Union Hall.

RESOLVED, that the persons so selected be appointed to meet at the Military Hall, on the first Monday in August, at 9 o'clock in the forenoon, for the purpose of organizing and taking up the business left unfinished by the late Board of Commissioners at their dissolution.

RESOLVED, that it be recommended to the respective Societies composing the Trades' Union, and to the members thereof, to purchase copies of the late trial of the Journeymen Cordwainers of Hudson for conspiracy, so that the two spirited members of the Hudson Society, who went to the expense of employing a reporter, and publishing the trial for the benefit of their fellow men, may not be losers thereby. . .

National Laborer, Aug. 13, 1836, p. 83, col. 2.

[August 8] . . . Roll called and a quorum being present by the acknowledgment of 42 Societies, the credentials of Joshua Fletcher, from the Coach Makers' Society, was accepted as Finance Committeeman in place of John Doke, resigned. Credentials from the Paper Stainers' Society, acknowledging Jonathan Hackney and John L. Raybold as delegates in place of C. B. Hoffner and A. Bastian, resigned. . .

The Resolution of Mr. Crossin in relation to conspiracy laws was taken up, and after an animated discussion the whole subject was laid on the table.

The President of the Union, Mr. William English,

after an interesting address, tendered his resignation, which was accepted. . .

RESOLVED, that we go into a nomination for President of this Union, when Messrs. Wm. Thompson and Robt. M'Cally were nominated; after a recess of ten minutes the tellers reported Wm. Thompson as President elect; who accordingly, after a neat speech, took his seat as President of the Union for the unexpired term. . .

National Laborer, Aug. 20, 1836, p. 87, col. 2.

[August 16] At an adjourned meeting of the Union, held on the 16th inst. the President in the chair, a quorum of twenty-five Societies being present, the monthly report of the Treasurer was submitted and accepted, and the resolutions appended adopted.

A Communication from the Society of Hand Loom Weavers No. 2, was accepted, and laid on the table. . .

National Laborer, Sept. 3, 1836, p. 95, col. 2.

[August 31] The Trades' Union held a special meeting on Wednesday evening, for the purpose of settling a constitutional question in relation to the finances; namely, to ascertain whether two-thirds of the societies had agreed to change the monthly dues from $6\frac{1}{4}$ to $10\frac{1}{2}$ cents per month.

The names of the Societies who had agreed to the amendment were then called, when it appeared that 35 were in favor; this not being two-thirds the constitutional number, a motion was then made to return to the old monthly dues, which after some discussion was postponed, that the roll might be again called, in order to be certain of the number in favor.

The roll was then called, when it was ascertained that, though the greater number had paid the sum required in the amendment, only 21 reported decidedly in favor of the $10\frac{1}{2}$ cents dues. The subject was then postponed till the next stated meeting, in order to give

an opportunity to all Societies to report at that time. Donation of \$20 to the day laborers. A resolution offered, instructing finance delegates to forward their receipt books to the auditing committee.

National Laborer, Sept. 10, 1836, p. 99, col. 2.

[September 6] . . . A communication from the Hand-loom Weavers, No. 2, was read and accepted.

On motion, resolved, that a committee of five be appointed to investigate the subject of the communication with the delegates from No. 1 and 2, Hand-loom Weavers. Committee: Crossin, Stevenson, S. C. Thompson, O'Neil, and Collins.

The Auditing Committee presented a communication asking the Union to take some decisive action in relation to the receipt-books of the Societies.

Wm. Thompson, as chairman of the committee on the Co-operative Loan Fund, made a report, which was read, and, by request of the chairman, was laid on the table.

The By-Laws were then taken up, and several adopted.

The committee appointed to report on the communication of the Hand-Loom Weavers, reported in favour of the Society, and one thousand dollars appropriated for the support of the members of the Society. . .

National Laborer, Sept. 17, 1836, p. 103, col. 2.

[September 12] The semi-annual meeting of the Trades' Union was held at Military Hall, on Tuesday evening last.

The credentials from the component societies were read and accepted. The minutes of preceding meetings were also read and accepted. Reports were presented from the Finance Committee and the Treasurer, which were read and accepted.

After which, the President (Wm. Thompson) an-

nounced that the term of service of the officers had expired, and that the new convention was now to be organized by electing its officers for the ensuing six months. He then left the chair after making an appropriate and eloquent address, in which he declined being a candidate for re-election, and J. Ferral was called to the chair, and J. D. Miller appointed Secretary.

The Convention then entered into a nomination for officers, and it was resolved that each officer be elected separately, after which the election proceeded, at the close of which the following persons were duly elected: for *President*, Thomas Hogan; *Vice President*, Eli Dillin; *Recording Secretary*, Jos. D. Miller; *Corresponding Secretary*, Wm. Gilmore; *Treasurer*, John Caney.

[September 15] . . . An application was then read from the Fairmount Trade Association, asking the sanction of the Union for the course of its members in resisting an attempt on the part of employers to reduce their wages. The application was accepted, and a committee of five appointed to investigate the subject.

The committee then retired, and an application from the Gilders was then read, accepted, and referred to a special committee of five.

The By-laws were then taken up for consideration, and were discussed till the committee appointed to confer with the Fairmount delegates returned. They were then laid on the table to hear the report of the committee, which was read and accepted. It was then resolved, that the Union sanction the stand-out of the Fairmount Trade Association against an attempted reduction of their wages. Resolved, that \$500 be appropriated for their aid. Resolved, that a committee of five be appointed to wait on the members of the Asso-

ciation to adjust, if practicable, the dispute between them and the employer.

The report of the committee on the Gilders was then read and accepted. And after some discussion it was resolved, that the delegates be instructed to lay the case of the Gilders (who wished to strike for a small advance of wages) before their respective societies, and that the Union recommend the Gilders to their support.

S. C. Thomson gave notice that he wished to collect the 2 cent dues required by the National Union. On motion, it was resolved, that the Finance Committee be instructed to lay before the Union, at its next meeting, the amount of money which has been paid into the funds under that requisition. . .

Philadelphia Public Ledger, Sept. 17, 1836, p. 2, col. 4.

[September 15] . . . The Fairmont Trade Association informed the Convention that a portion of their members are on a stand out against a reduction of their wages, attempted by one of their employers. The case was referred to a Committee of five, who, after being absent, and hearing the evidence in relation to the matter, reported favorable to the course pursued by the members of said association. When, on motion, the sum of Five Hundred Dollars, was appropriated to their use, and the same ordered to be published. The Journeymen Gilders' Society reported that they intended to strike for an advance on their former wages of $3\frac{3}{4}$ cents per hour, making $18\frac{3}{4}$ instead of 15 cents per hour. Their case was also referred to a Committee, who reported in favor of the strike, and recommended them to the protection of the various Societies which was agreed to.

National Laborer, Sept. 24, 1836, p. 107, col. 2.

[September 21] . . . The committee on the

Fairmount Association appointed to settle the difference between the employer and journeymen, reported that the journeymen have obtained the advance asked, and in some cases have received more, and that everything is amicably settled. . . .

On motion it was resolved, that the report of the Committee on the Co-operative Saving Fund be taken up. The articles were considered separately, and all finally adopted.

It was then resolved, that the Secretary be instructed to lay the Constitution as adopted before the various societies for their consideration. The report of the Committee on the By-Laws was then accepted, and the resolution filling the blank in the Secretary's salary with \$7 was adopted. The bill of the Finance Secretary was ordered to be paid.

J. Ferral informed the Union that a number of females in Norristown were now on strike, and requested that a committee of three be appointed to visit that place. But while the subject was under consideration the Union adjourned.

National Laborer, Oct. 8, 1836, p. 115, col. 2.

[October 5] . . . Resolved, that the Auditing Committee meet as soon as practicable, and be allowed a reasonable compensation for their services. . . .

Credentials were read and accepted from the Paper Makers, House Carpenters, Oak Coopers, and Cordwainers (Men's Branch). . . .

The Corresponding Secretary read letters from the Newark and Pittsburgh Unions, whose prospects are cheering. The Corresponding Secretary was instructed to inform the Pittsburg Union the objects of the National Union. A letter was received from the Norristown Trade Association requesting admittance into

the Union, and thereupon two delegates were appointed to visit the above Association.

The Union proceeded to nominate delegates from each society to represent this Union in the National Trades' Union to be held on the 4th Monday of this month. Resolved, that the election of the above delegates be deferred; and notice be given, through the *National Laborer*, that the election will take place on the next stated meeting. . . . A committee of five was appointed to make arrangements for the meeting of the National Union.

The Committee to report amendments to the Constitution, reported several amendments, which, after some debate, were adopted.

The following resolution by J. Caney was then adopted. Resolved, that the Treasurer shall furnish (in circulars prepared in part in print for that purpose) to each Society, the quarterly report of the state of the funds of the Union, showing also therein the number of Societies represented at that time, and the number of members represented in the Union. . . .

National Laborer, Oct. 15, 1836, p. 119, col. 2.

[October 12] . . . The Credentials from the Horn Comb Makers and Paper Stainers, were accepted. . . .

The Committee appointed to visit the Norristown Association, made a favorable report, and recommended it to the Union. Reports from a number of societies were then received in relation to the monthly dues.

The unfinished business relative to delegates to represent the Union in the National Trades' Union, was called up, when it was agreed that ten delegates be appointed; the Union then went into a nomination. The chair appointed J. B. Pearson, and Joshua W. Fletch-

er, tellers for the election of delegates, which resulted in the choice of Samuel C. Thompson, Joseph D. Miller, Thomas Hogan, John Crossin, John Ferrall, Wm. Thompson, Eli Dillin, Milo M. Miller, John Hays, Peter Collins. . .

National Laborer, Oct. 22, 1836, p. 123, col. 2.

[October 19] . . . An application for admission into the Union from the Norristown Trade Association, was read and referred to a special committee. . .

Credentials from the Union Beneficial Society of Journeymen Cordwainers was read and accepted. The Secretary was authorized to demand the roll book of the different Societies composing the Trades' Union.

The Auditing Committee made a final report, which was read and accepted. After the acceptance of the above report, it was resolved, that 60 copies be printed for the Societies of the Union.

The Committee appointed to examine the Constitution of the Norristown Trade Association, reported favourably. It was then moved that the Association be admitted a member of this Union—agreed to. Credentials from the above Association was read and accepted.

The Committee to make preparations for the National Union, reported, that they had selected the Military Hall as the place for holding the meetings of the National Union. . .

A Communication from the Journeymen Tailors was read and accepted, and the following resolutions respecting their strike were adopted. Resolved, that this Union approve of the strike of the Journeymen Tailors, conscious that they are deserving of the sympathy and support of this Union, and of all the Societies composing it, and we hereby pledge ourselves to the Journeymen Tailors, to stand by them, as they so nobly have stood by their friends in the city of New York, and by

this Union, in their day of adversity. Resolved, that this resolution be published in the usual number of papers.

The following resolution was offered by William Gilmore: Resolved, that the Financial Delegate of each Society be requested to furnish the Corresponding Secretary with twelve or more copies of the Bill of Prices received by their respective Societies, if printed; if not, one copy in writing.

The following resolution was offered by John Crossin, and laid on the table: Resolved, that a Committee of five be appointed to report and devise a more certain and effectual plan in sanctioning strikes and granting assistance to Societies on stand.

The report of the judges of the election at the last meeting for delegates to represent this Union in the National Trades' Union, was laid on the table, and the election being considered illegal, it was resolved that the Union proceed to hold another election. The same persons served as judges, and reported the following persons elected: John Crossin, Thomas Hogan, Wm. Thompson, Samuel C. Thompson, John Ferrall, Joseph D. Miller, Joshua S. Fletcher, John Hays, W. D. Jones, and Eli Dillin.

National Laborer, Nov. 12, 1836, p. 135, col. 2.

[November 8] . . . Credentials were read and received from the House Painters, Brush Makers, and Oak Coopers.

A communication was received from the Chester Creek Association, and read; when a committee was appointed to confer with the Delegates of the Association. After a short time the committee returned and reported favorably; when it was on motion resolved, that the Union sanction the strike, and support them against a reduction of prices.

A communication from the Hand Loom Weavers, No. 1, was read, and referred to a committee. The committee reported favorably; when an appropriation of \$500 was made to support them against a reduction. A communication from the Leather Dressers, No. 1, was read and referred to a committee of five. A communication from the Marble Laborers was read and referred to a committee, who reported favorably; when a motion was made, that the Union support them against a reduction of their wages, and that \$500 be appropriated for their use. . .

Several societies reported favorably of the Co-operative Loan Fund. It was resolved, that the Societies be requested to pay two months dues in advance. The Secretary of the Union was requested to notify the Secretaries of the Societies composing the Union, to call special meetings, as soon as practicable, for the purpose of paying two months' dues in advance. . .

National Laborer, Nov. 19, 1836, p. 139, col. 2.

[November 15] . . . Credentials from the Cabinet Makers and Jewellers were read and accepted. A communication from the Morocco Finishers was read and accepted, and referred to the committee appointed at the last meeting on the communication from the Morocco Finishers, No. 2.

A communication with a resolution from the Finance Committee was read, and after some amendments the resolution was passed in the following form: Resolved, that the fines accruing by the non-attendance of the members of the Finance Committee be collected from the Societies, and that they be appropriated to the use of such members as do attend; and further, that any member absenting himself from two successive meetings of the Committee his name shall be sent to his Society and his fine demanded.

The Delegates to the National Convention submitted a report which was accepted.

RESOLVED, that the Constitution of the Union be referred to a committee of 7, with instructions to insert an article authorizing the Union to loan its funds to Societies, for the purpose of co-operation. Wm. Thompson, T. Fitnam, John Crossin, Israel Young, W. B. Way, S. C. Shepherd, and John Caney were appointed a committee on the above resolution. . . .

National Laborer, Nov. 26, 1836, p. 143, col. 2.

[November 23] . . . The President took the Chair, called the delegates to order, and tendered his resignation as President of the Union. The judges appointed to conduct the election, reported the election of Wm. Thompson, President. A committee was appointed to prepare a vote of thanks to Thomas Hogan, who after being absent a short time, presented a highly complimentary report, which was ordered to be published in the *National Laborer*, *Pennsylvanian*, *United States Gazette and Ledger*.

Credentials from the Blacksmiths, Book Binders, Hand Loom Weavers, No. 2, Journeymen Cordwainers, Men's Branch, were read and accepted. . . .

The committee appointed to settle the dispute between the Leather Dressers' Societies was read and accepted. The Secretary was requested to lay the alterations to the Constitution before the Societies composing the Union.

Wm. Thompson reported to the Union that he had been appointed a committee on Co-operation, from the National Union, and agreeably to a resolution passed that body: a committee was appointed from this Union to act with him. The following were appointed the committee—Eli Dillin, John Crossin, Israel Young, W. D. Jones, Thomas Fitnam, and Joseph D. Miller. . . .

Public Ledger, Dec. 15, 1836, p. 3, col. 1. Meeting of Dec. 14.

[December 13] At a meeting of the Trades' Union held last evening, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

RESOLVED, that this Union takes a lively interest in the "strike" of the Saddlers and Harness Makers' Trade Society.

RESOLVED, that this Union recommend to the various Societies composing it, to assist the above Society by the grant of such loans of money as can be spared out of their funds as we entertain full confidence in the resources and integrity of the above Society.

RESOLVED, that this Union recommend the plan adopted by the Saddlers' Society, to every Society in the Union, believing it to be safe and certain in all its bearings and consequences, and more likely to establish our principles than any other plan yet adopted; and as such, believing it entitled to the support of every Society in the Union. . . Extract from the minutes.

JOSEPH D. MILLER.

Public Ledger, Dec. 27, 1836, p. 2, col. 4.

[December 24] At a meeting of the Trades' Union, held on Thursday evening last, it was on motion resolved, that one thousand dollars be appropriated to sustain the Journeymen Saddlers and Harness Makers in their present strike. JOSEPH D. MILLER, Rec. Sec.

National Laborer, Jan. 14, 1837, p. 171, col. 2.

[January 10] . . . Credentials were received from the Silver Smiths; Cordwainers' of Germantown; and Shell Comb Makers.

A letter from the Weavers of Kidminster was read, and referred to a special committee of three, viz: Messrs. Scott, M. Wilson, and Aspinall. Communications from the Iron Moulders, and Day Laborers; communication from the latter Society was referred to

a committee of three, viz: Messrs. Garrigues, Mansure, and Snyder. . .

Raymond's *Political Economy* was presented to the Union; it was then ordered to be deposited in the Library of the Workingmen's National Society.

The resignation of the Vice President was received. The Union then went into an election for Vice President which resulted in the choice of Israel Young. . .

National Laborer, Feb. 18, 1837, p. 191, col. 2.

[February 14] . . . Application for membership from the Gilders Society was received and referred to a committee of three. Credentials were received from the Coach Makers, Ship Joiners, and Leather Dressers No. 2. . .

Communication from Saddlers and Harness Makers was read and accepted. Another communication, with resolutions, was read, and after a great deal of discussion, was laid on the table, and a special meeting be called on next Thursday evening, for the consideration of the resolutions.

The Committee to investigate the application of the Gilders, reported favorable, and before the action of the Union was taken on this Report, the hour of adjournment arrived.

National Laborer, March 18, 1837, p. 207, col. 4.

[March 16] The Semi-annual meeting of the Union was held at the Military Hall, the President in the chair.

A communication was received from the Kensington Trade Association, asking for admission into the Union, which was referred to a special committee of 7, to confer with the Society.

The following Credentials were read and accepted: From Paper Stainers, Plasterers' Trade Society, Coach Makers, Painters and Trimmers, House Carpenters,

House Painters, Frame Work Knitters, Cedar Coopers, Hand Loom Weavers, No. 1, Cordwainers, Men's Branch, Cordwainers, Ladies' Branch, Hatters' Society, Ship Joiners, Philadelphia Typographical Association, Hatters' Society of Germantown, Saddlers and Harness Makers, Marble Laborers, Glass Cutters, Oak Coopers, Silver Platers and Metal Workers, Brush Makers, Cotton Spinners, Cabinet Makers, Shell Comb Makers, Cordwainers of Germantown, Leather Dressers No. 2, Hand Loom Weavers, No. 2, Book Binders, Black and White Smiths, and Tailors. . .

The President rose and gave a brief history of the Union for the last six months, which was unanimously received, and ordered to be printed in the *National Laborer*.

The Union then proceeded to an election for officers, which resulted in the choice of the following persons, to serve for the ensuing six months: *President*—John Crossin; *Vice President*—Henry Scott; *Treasurer*—John Caney; *Rec. Secretary*—Joseph D. Miller; *Cor. Secretary*—John Ferral. . .

Public Ledger, May 11, 1837, p. 2, col. 5.

[May 9] At a stated meeting of the Trades' Union held on Tuesday evening last, the present "standout" of the Journeymen House Painters and Glaziers, against an attempt by their employers to reduce their wages was, after being duly considered, sanctioned by the Union and an appropriation of \$500 granted for their relief. . .

Public Ledger, Oct. 21, 1837, p. 2, col. 5.

An adjourned meeting of the Trades' Union will be held on Thursday evening, 26th inst. at the Military Hall, at 7 o'clock, for the purpose of taking into consideration the Report submitted by the Committee appointed on the subject of Co-operation.

The Members of the Union are particularly requested to be present, and the Members of the different Societies composing the Union, are invited to attend the discussion.

Printed Copies of the Report are ready for delivery and can be obtained at the bar of the Military Hall, any time previous to the meeting.

WM. GILMORE, Sec'ry.

(f) "WHAT IS THE TRADES' UNION?"

Pennsylvanian, Feb. 9, 1836, p. 2, col. 6, 7. Extract from a "communication" signed J.C.

. . . The Trades' Union of Philadelphia, is an Association or Confederation consisting of forty-eight trade societies or associations, sovereign and independent in themselves, but bound by ties of honor and interest, to support and assist each other in cases of aggression or danger. Their purposes of formation are only to prevent themselves from being reduced to abject poverty and slavery, through the avaricious graspings of capital and monopoly. In the month of March, 1834, not two years since, they constituted themselves a body, at that time consisting only of 13 Societies, the largest one of which could not number 250 members. Now look at the contrast. With two Societies numbering more than 900 each; four of more than 700, and a great proportion of from two to three hundred. Our funds in our infancy were scarcely sufficient to bear the monthly expenses of the Union's delegates, without affording any assistance to the represented Societies. Now, our monthly receipts are generally from \$400 to \$500; and at the last monthly meeting the amount received reached the unexampled sum of six hundred and ninety-one dollars and twenty cents. The number of delegates representing the Societies will at the next elections probably amount to four hundred. The members

in all may be calculated by the monthly collections. Each individual is bound to pay the sum of $6\frac{1}{4}$ cents into the hands of the delegates representing his Society, and such other sum as the auxiliary may require for its own purposes; and for this trifling assessment, each man is protected from the rapacity of the greedy employer, and sure of the support and the protection of nearly every mechanic in Philadelphia. Within the last six months more than one half of the Societies in the Union have struck, and no instance is known where a Society has struck, under the sanction of the Union, and failed in that strike. Neither has the Union ever sanctioned any Society without first appointing a Committee to make diligent enquiry to prevent imposition on the part of the Journeyman, and if possible to avoid intolerance. They will grant assistance to no Society who has not been represented six months. The delegates to the Union are removable semi-annually; therefore the danger of unjust and partizan influence has no groundwork, no foundation to build upon; as the individual who may be popular in the Union this term may never sit in it again, and it is understood to be the best and most effectual plan to remove the delegates at least once a year. The funds of the Union are also secure against the powerful representation of the larger societies, each one of which selects one individual to transact the money matters of the institution denominated the Finance Committee and this alone is under their control, so that the society of fifty members have the same responsibility and interest in the funds that the society of nine hundred and fifty have. Auxiliary branches of the Union have been frequently petitioned for in various parts of the State, and the Union has at length determined to take that matter into consideration,

and accordingly have appointed a Committee to report on the petitions.

This then is the statistical account of the Philadelphia Trades Union, which in the lapse of less than two years has more than trebled its original number. This is an Institution that should be looked upon by every mechanic with gratitude and pride, presenting a beautiful specimen of mechanism in theory; and far more beautiful and beneficial in practice. This is the institution that has been designated as a nest of disorganizers—that has been assailed from the pulpit and the editorial throne. We preach no religion in the Union. The followers of Christ acknowledge a time for all things—we do the same. The Union was founded for other purposes, and therefore it is no place for discussion about theology. We have laws in existence, that party, political or religious sectarian questions shall not be discussed, then how or why are we entitled to the abusive epithets bestowed on us; or still the more dangerous doctrines said to be inculcated by us? They are false, and the authors of such libels know them to be so. We believe that society, as it is now constituted, is calculated to produce increasing ruin on the great mass of the people; but we also know that the change must be gradual, as the evil has been; and we look for these changes not through the subversion of the laws or the power of physical force—but from the justice of our claims and the true administration of our fundamental laws, we wish to produce a moral change in society, by the appeals of reason, at the same time we expect, to be stigmatized and cursed for our zeal and disregard of danger. . . . As a proof of the employers power over single Societies, it would be well to know that previous to the formation of the Union, there was not more than

six or eight trades in Philadelphia that had control over their own labor; whereas at this time there is more than fifty. This is a conclusive proof that the acknowledgment of Trade Societies, and a protest against a general unity is produced by the power over the first and fears from the latter. The individuals in Single Societies finding themselves, from want of funds or other circumstances, in danger, carried out the principle of self defence further than the employers designed, therefore the opposition to it. If it was right in individuals of one trade to unite, it was equally just and proper for them to call in their brethren of other trades to assist them in establishing just rules and regulations for their trade, consequently upon their capital, the labor of their hands—but this objection, as well as the power of coercion we are said to exercise over the auxiliary members, should never be started in a republican Government. The Philadelphia Trades' Union is an exact prototype of the Federal Union. Our principles are their principles; even the government is based on the same rules and laws on a miniature scale. For the truth of this assertion—for the defence of our principles and rights, we throw down the gauntlet of defiance, and challenge any to oppose us in a fair field, conscious that he who knows the Trades' Union, and is opposed to it, is no friend to Republican and Federal America.-- J. C.





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